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Afghanistan

1947:

Britain withdraws from India. Pakistan is carved out of Indian and Afghan lands. [2]

1953:

Prince Mohammad Daoud becomes prime minister. [2]

1955:

Afghanistan approaches the United States for military ties, but Washington considers the country too far away to be important. Afghanistan develops ties with Moscow. [2]

1959:

The purdah, the system of secluding women from the sight of men in Hindu or Muslim communities, is made optional, and women begin to enroll in university. Women enter the workforce, and the government. [2]

1973:

April - Amid unrest over a stagnant economy, Mohammed Daoud Khan, the king's nephew, seizes power while the king is away on vacation in Italy. The king stays in Italy.

July - Afghanistan's Republican government is created with Khan as the first president of Afghanistan. [2]

During the Daoud regime, Iran, encouraged by the US, seeks to replace the Soviet Union as Kabul's biggest donor with a \$2 billion economic aid agreement. [31]

1975:

September - Prodded by Iran which is conditioning its aid on such policies, Daoud dismisses 40 Soviet trained military officers and moves to reduce future Afghan dependence on officer training in the USSR by initiating training arrangements with India and Egypt. Most important in Soviet eyes, Daoud gradually breaks off his alliance with the PDP. [31]

1978:

April - Pro-Soviet leftists (the PDP) stage a new coup in Afghanistan. Nur Mohammad Taraki becomes prime minister, and Babrak Karmal and Hafizullah Amin become deputy prime ministers. They win almost immediate recognition from the Soviet Union. [2] But the coup is apparently not Soviet backed. [23]

Summer - The Taraki regime announces Marxist-Leninist reforms such as the elimination of usury, equal rights for women, land reforms and administrative decrees.

Violent protests erupt over the reforms, many of which challenge Afghan cultural patterns. Taraki's political repression antagonizes others. [2]

Nevertheless the new regime is generally popular and goes on to hugely improve medical care and literacy. The gains for women are particularly marked. [23]

June - An alliance formed by a number of conservative Islamic factions is now waging a guerilla war against the government. [31]

1979:

March - Hafizullah Amin becomes prime minister but Taraki retains other high political posts. Revolts in the countryside expand, and the Afghan Army collapses. [2]

Taraki goes to Moscow to press the Soviets to send ground troops to help the Afghan army put down the Moujahedeen. He is promised military assistance, but not ground troops as the Soviets say this would give their common enemies an excuse to send armed bands into the country. [31]

April - At this time, and possibly earlier than this, US foreign service officers begin meeting with Moujahedeen leaders to determine their needs. [31]

July 3rd - President Carter signs the first directive for secret aid worth \$500 million to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. Zbigniew Brzezinski writes a note to the president in which he explains to him that in his opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention. [12] [23]

A US State Department Report states: "the United State's larger interests ... would be served by the demise of the Taraki-Amin regime, despite whatever setbacks this might mean for future social and economic reforms in Afghanistan." [31]

September - A confrontation between Taraki and Amin removes Taraki from power.

October - Taraki assassinated by Amin supporters.

December - Soviet troops begin to arrive in Afghanistan. It is unclear to what degree this is at Amin's request or with his approval. [31] Zbigniew Brzezinski writes to president Carter that "We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam war." [12]

Amin and many of his followers are killed, most likely by Soviet troops flooding into Kabul. The Soviets throw their support behind Babrak Karmal. [2]

The US government imposes "penalties" on the Soviet Union because of its "invasion" of Afghanistan.

These range from halting the delivery of grain to the Soviet Union to keeping the US team out of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. [31]

Washington begins secretly funnelling billions of dollars of sophisticated weaponry into Afghanistan, with the CIA taking the lead in training and funding. Iran, China, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, who all wish to see a weakened USSR, supply additional military assistance. [7]

1980:

Resistance to the Soviet occupation forms within Afghanistan, and across the border in Peshawar, Pakistan. The groups call themselves "mujahideen," from the Persian word meaning "warriors." The CIA begins supporting the rebels with arms supplied through Pakistan. [2]

MI6 begins largest postwar covert operation in Afghanistan to train mojahidin groups fighting the Soviet occupation. [1]

The CIA becomes the grand coordinator: purchasing or arranging the manufacture of Soviet-style weapons from Egypt, China, Poland, Israel and elsewhere, or supplying their own; arranging for military training by Americans, Egyptians, Chinese and Iranians; hitting up Middle-Eastern countries for donations, notably Saudi Arabia which gives many hundreds of millions of dollars in aid each year, totaling probably more than a billion; pressuring and bribing Pakistan - with whom recent American relations had been very poor - to rent out its country as a military staging area and sanctuary; putting the Pakistani Director of Military Operations, Brigadier Mian Mohammad Afzal, onto the CIA payroll to ensure Pakistani cooperation. Military and economic aid which had been cut off will be restored, Pakistan is told by the United States, if they will join the great crusade. Only a month before the Soviet intervention, anti-American mobs had burned and ransacked the US embassy in Islamabad and American cultural centers in two other Pakistani cities. [31]

Throughout the 1980s, the karmal and then the Najibullah regimes, despite the exigencies of the war, pursued a program of modernisation and broadening of their base: bringing electricity, health clinics, a measure of land reform, literacy....trying to carry it all out with moderation and sensitivity. [31]

As long as Soviet troops remained, the conflict in Afghanistan could be presented to the American mind as little more than a battle between Russian invaders and Afghanistan resistance/freedom fighters; as if the Afghanistan army and government didn't exist, or certainly not with a large following of people who favoured reforms and didn't want to live under a fundamentalist Islamic government, probably a majority of the population. [31]

1984:

Covert military aid to the mujahideen increases under the Reagan administration. [2]

The mujahideen also generate funds through the drug trade. US officials refuse to investigate charges of heroin dealing by its Afghan allies "because US narcotics policy in Afghanistan has been subordinated to the war against Soviet influence there." [30] [31]

1986:

February - Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev expresses pessimism about the future of the Afghan war, calling it "a bleeding wound" and declaring he would like to bring troops home "in the nearest future."

March - Margaret Thatcher welcomes Abdul Haq, an Afghan rebel leader who admitted that he had ordered the planting of a bomb at Kabul airport in 1984 which killed at least 28 people. [31]

April - President Reagan decides to supply the Afghan resistance with heat-seeking Stinger anti aircraft missiles. [2]

MI6 begins supplying Afghan mojahidin groups with 'Blowpipe' shoulder-launched missiles, some of which are used to shoot down passenger airliners. [1]

Mujaheddin leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is invited to London. Margaret Thatcher hails him as a "freedom fighter". He is known to have trafficked in opium and thrown acid in the face of women who refused to wear the veil. [23]

The CIA gives its backing to a plan put forward by the Pakistan intelligence agency, the ISI, to recruit people from around the world to join the Afghan jihad. More than 100,000 Islamic militants are trained in Pakistan between 1982 and 1992. Operatives who would eventually join the Taliban and al-Qa'ida are recruited in an Islamic college in Brooklyn, New York and given paramilitary training at a CIA camp in Virginia. This is called "Operation Cyclone". [23]

In Pakistan, mujaheddin training camps are run by the CIA and MI6, with the British SAS training future al-Qa'ida and Taliban fighters in bomb making and other black arts. This continues long after the Soviet army withdraws in 1989. [23]

July - The Kremlin removes Karmal in an attempt to find an internal political solution. He is replaced with Dr. Sayid Mohammad Najibullah, the former head of the secret police. [2]

1987:

July - In their first public meeting, Gorbachev tells Najibullah that Soviet troops will be out of Afghanistan in 12 months.

November - New Afghan constitution adopted. Najibullah is elected president but much of his support comes from the Soviets, and many Afghans revile him as a communist. [2]

1988:

April - The U.N.-sponsored accords on Soviet troop withdrawal are signed in Geneva by Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Soviet Union and the United States. Gorbachev announces the start of Soviet troop withdrawals. [2] Contrary to the agreement the USA continues to supply arms to the mojahedeen. [1]

1989:

February - Last Soviet soldiers leave Afghanistan. [2]

Gorbachev urges the US to support an embargo on arms shipments into Afghanistan and a cease-fire between the two warring sides. Both proposals are turned down by the new Bush administration. [31]

President Najibullah criticizes the American rejection of Gorbachev's proposal, offering to return the Soviet weapons if the rebels agree to lay down their weapons and negotiate. There is no reported response to this offer from the US, or from the rebels, who in the past have refused such offers. [31]

The cost of this decade of fighting is hard to calculate. Perhaps one million Afghans lost their lives and up to 5,000,000 were made refugees in a proxy war, fought at arms length, between the USSR and the USA. Many have argued that in funding and training the opposition to the Soviets, the CIA created the radical Islamists who were later to become the terrorists of September 11th. [7]

1990:

April - The rebels are reported to be so divided that they are killing more of each other more than of government forces. Meanwhile the CIA supplied arms are flooding the region as Pakistani armed forces take what they want and guerilla leaders get rich by selling arms on to criminals and the Iranian military.

Estimates state that 60%-80% of the arms never make it to the intended recipients. [31]

1992:

April - Mujahideen guerrillas and other Islamic rebels move in on Kabul. President Najibullah agrees to step down, but before he can leave, Afghan rebels with the assistance of Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, leader of the government's secret police, seize the city and keep him there. [2]

An agreement on ending arms supply, reached between the United States and the Soviet Union, comes into effect. [31]

When the Mujaheddin finally capture Kabul in April 1992, fighting quickly continues as the commanders of the various factions vie for control. Anarchy ensues; tens of thousands are killed; Kabul is devastated in repeated and often random rocket attacks; and whole districts of the city are ethnically cleansed. [7] [31]

December - More than 1,300 delegates from around the country, comprising rebels, religious leaders, and intellectuals meet in Kabul to quickly form an Islamic republic. They elect Burhanuddin Rabbani as president. But the majority of the rebels boycott the meeting and the council falls apart in factional squabbling. [2]

1993:

March - Rebel groups outside Kabul designate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar as their prime minister. Hekmatyar is the leader of the Hezb-i-Islami, the most favored of all the rebel factions nurtured by the CIA. [2]

Hekmatyar had rained Kabul with US supplied missiles, killing 2,000 people, until the leaders of the other factions agreed to make him Prime Minister. [23]

June - Hekmatyar is formally sworn in.

September - An interim constitution is approved with planned elections announced for 1994. [2]

1994:

From murky beginnings in 1994, instigated and controlled by Pakistani Intelligence and financed by Saudi Arabia, a group calling itself the Taliban, emerges as an alternative to self-serving, Mujaheddin in-fighting. Initially popular, they sweep to military victories across Afghanistan. [7]

November - Hekmatyar and his guerrillas move in on Kabul, seeking to oust Rabbani as president. In nearly daily fighting, the city is reduced to rubble. Meanwhile, Pakistan's ISI dumps Hekmatyar in favour of the Taliban. [2]

An estimated 25,000 people are killed in Kabul, most of them civilians, in rocket and artillery attacks, by these guerrillas who will later become part of the "Northern Alliance". [23]

1995:

March - The Taliban decimates Hekmatyar's army.

Autumn - Thousands flee Kabul amid fierce fighting between Taliban and Rabbani forces. [2]

1996:

June - Hekmatyar signs a peace pact with former enemy Rabbani becoming prime minister in Kabul. [2]

September - The Taliban take Kabul, forcing Hekmatyar, Rabbani and his military chief Ahmad Shah Massoud, the man most credited with ousting the Soviets, to flee. They take Najibullah from his refuge in a U.N. compound, torture him to death, and hang his bloated body outside the presidential palace. [2]

The Taliban are courted by the US oil lobby who want to run an oil pipeline from the Caspian basin through Afghanistan. [23]

1997:

February - A senior US diplomat explains his government's point of view: "The Taliban will probably develop like Saudi Arabia. There will be Aramco, pipelines, an emir, no parliament and lots of Sharia law. We can live with that." [30]

May - Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum, the former military commander under Najibullah and the Taliban's major opposition, suffers a major blow as his second in command defects to the Taliban.

The Taliban takes control of Dostum's stronghold, the ancient northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif, marking the first time Afghanistan is largely united under one power since the Soviets left.

Taliban forces retreat from Mazar-i-Sharif after losing 100 men in 18 hours of fighting. This marks the first retreat in the Taliban's history. [2]

1998:

August - Taliban tries to take Mazar-I-Sharif again. They succeed, but commit what has been called the worst slaughter of civilians in the Afghan civil war. Many of the victims are Shiite Muslims; the Taliban are Sunnis. The Taliban become the de facto rulers of Afghanistan, taking control of 90 percent of the country. They continue to face opposition from a loose union of rebels called the Northern Alliance. [2]

US launches cruise missile attacks against Al Qaida training camps in Afghanistan. Britain provides strong political support. [1]

2001:

July - A briefing paper for President Bush warns "We [the CIA and FBI] believe that OBL [Osama bin Laden] will launch a significant terrorist attack against US and/or Israeli interests in the coming weeks. The attack will be spectacular and designed to inflict mass casualties against US facilities or interests. Attack preparations have been made. Attack will occur with little or no warning." FBI agents had already noted suspicious people signing up for courses on big jet simulators. One had said he believed that kamikaze attacks on New York and Washington were being planned. The agents were threatened that if they went public, they would suffer under the National Security Act. [23]

September 9th - Northern Alliance leader Ahmad Shah Masood is injured in a suicide bomb attack. He dies on Sept. 14. [2]

September 11th - Thousands are killed when hijackers commandeer four planes and crash them into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C. A fourth plane is apparently forced down by passengers in Pennsylvania, before it can reach its intended target. The United States quickly identifies Osama bin Laden, who is believed to be hiding in Afghanistan, under the protection of the Taliban, as the prime suspect in the attacks. [2]

A few days after the attacks a special charter flight takes 11 members of the bin Laden family from Boston to Saudi Arabia. The White House official line is that the bin Ladens are above suspicion. Bush personally asks the Senate to limit the Congressional investigation into the attacks. [23]

Nearly five years later the FBI admit that they have no hard evidence connecting Bin Laden to the attacks. [20]

September 16th - Five days after 9-11, the NY Times reports that Washington delivered to Pakistan a series of demands. Among them, Washington "demanded...the elimination of truck convoys that provide much of the food and other supplies to Afghanistan's civilian population." The numbers estimated to be relying on these convoys is about 5 million. [9]

Estimates of those "at grave risk of starvation" rise from 5 million before 9-11 to 7.5 million a month later. [32]

September 18th - A delegation of Pakistani officials fails to persuade Taliban officials to hand over bin Laden. [2]

September 20th - Afghan clerics recommend that the Taliban invite bin Laden to leave the country. The United States dismisses the move as inadequate. [2]

September 22nd - The United Arab Emirates severs ties with the Taliban after failing to persuade the regime to hand over bin Laden for what it calls a fair international trial. [2]

September 23rd - The Taliban says bin Laden has gone missing and they could not ask him to leave the country. [2]

September 25th - Saudi Arabia cuts all relations with the Taliban for continuing to harbor "terrorists." Pakistan remains the only country to recognize the regime, but has temporarily withdrawn all staff from its embassy in the Afghan capital for security reasons. [2]

September 30th - Afghanistan's government says its agents know bin Laden's location and that he is under their control. The Taliban says it is willing to negotiate bin Laden's surrender, if U.S. officials present evidence of his involvement in the Sept. 11 attacks. [2]

October 1st - Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar says "Americans don't have the courage to come here," and repeatedly warns the United States to "think and think again before attacking Afghanistan." [2]

October 7th - The Taliban says it's ready to put bin Laden on trial for the Sept. 11 attacks. Even bin Laden approved this plan. Washington rejects the statement, saying bin Laden must be handed over. [2] [23]

Afghan opposition leader Abdul Haq urges the US not to bomb, but instead employ psychological pressure which would quickly topple the Taliban. He claims that civilian casualties from bombing will garner support for the Taliban. [24]

Hours later, the U.S. and Britain begin massive bombing campaign against Al Qaida and Taliban regime. Civilian deaths in the war outnumber those killed on September 11th. [1]

Afghan leaders committed to overthrowing the Taliban urge the US to stop the air raids and appeal to the international media to call for an end to the "bombing of innocent people". They urge that other means be adopted to overthrow the hated Taliban regime, a goal they believe can be achieved without further death and destruction. [32]

The five weeks of ferocious aerial bombardment involve everything from precision-guided weapons to cluster bombs, B-52 carpet bombings and BLU-82 'Daisy Cutters'. When the American attacks are over, the Northern Alliance walks into Kabul to find virtually no resistance. [7]

More than 22,000 weapons are dropped in the first six months, one in four of which miss their target. [1]

A quarter of a million people flee to Iran and Pakistan a further 200,000 people are internally displaced.

They have no external aid since the humanitarian efforts have been stopped by the bombing. [1]

There are many reports of deliberate US attacks on civilians and soldiers who have surrendered. A Red Cross compound is also bombed. [1]

The civilian infrastructure is deliberately targeted, destroying the main telephone exchange in Kabul, the electrical grid in Kandahar, the largest hydro-electric power station, religious schools, TV and radio stations. [1]

The Northern Alliance, the Afghan allies of the US, are later accused of atrocities. [6]

November - British Defence Secretary Geoffrey Hoon tells parliament, 'The use of cluster bombs [in Afghanistan] is entirely appropriate. Against certain targets they are the best and most effective weapons we have.' [23]

By the end of the month an estimated 70,000 US cluster bomblets lie unexploded in Afghanistan. Their effect is no different from land mines. [23]

The savagery displayed by the US and British supported Northern Alliance troops is terrible. In Kunduz Taliban prisoners had oil poured over them and were set alight, or were shot in the back, or were packed into steel containers and left to die in the heat. Up to 4,000 were killed in this way. [23]

The British and US media support their governments' actions throughout, voicing only minor concern over some of the tactics used, but almost never criticising the war itself. [1]

December 10th - Zabul, the last Taliban-controlled province in Afghanistan, falls, consigning the reign of the fundamentalist Islamic group to history. The remnants of the regime flee to the Tora Bora complex, east of Kabul, where they are besieged by U.S. and opposition forces. [2]

2002:

The first group of prisoners lands at the U.S. base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on January 11th.

A U.S. plane attacks a wedding party in Uruzgan province, killing 48 and injuring 120. [2]

May - The head of the FBI concedes in Senate testimony 8 months after 9-11 that after the most intensive international investigation in history, the FBI could only report that it "believed" the plot might have been hatched in Afghanistan but that it was implemented in Europe and the UAE, all US allies. [9]

A Guardian investigation concludes that between 10,000 and 20,000 people have died as an indirect result of US bombing. [1]

June - Reports by Human Rights Watch note that the warlords now in control of much of rural Afghanistan are terrorising the populace, with women being particularly under threat. [1]

July - Professor Marc Herald, University of New Hampshire, estimates that between 3,125 and 3,620 Afghan civilians have been killed by US bombing up to now. [1]

November - The UN estimates that 50 to 100 people are killed every week by unexploded bombs and landmines. [23]

2003:

The security situation in Afghanistan is now worse than it was under Taliban rule. Opium production has soared; Afghans, especially women suffer deprivation from the warlords armed by the US; the US forces are also accused of many violations of international law.[3] [4] [5]

2005:

Conditions in Afghanistan remain terrible, the government has little sway outside the capital and the UN ranks the country as the sixth worst on Earth. The USA maintains 14 bases around the country and is widely accused of prisoner abuses, notably at Bagram air base. [8]

2006:

January - A US airstrike on a Pakistani village near the Afghan border kills at least 18 people including women and children. [10]

Insurgent attacks increase. The rule of law has collapsed. Britain is soon to send in another 3,500 troops. [11]

May - Charity Save the Children ranks Afghanistan's newborn mortality rate as second highest in the world. [13]

Taliban resistance increases in southern Afghanistan, as do US airstrikes. [14] [15] [16] [19] [21]

June-July - A UN report comes to light which documents some current Afghan MPs as being responsible for torture and massacres.[17]

A US army report shows that the torture of detainees in Afghanistan and elsewhere has been covered up. [18]

Journalists in Afghanistan are told what they should and shouldn't report. Notably they are asked not to criticise foreign troops or interview Taliban leaders. [22]

Fighting between Afghan "militants" and US led coalition forces continues, with heavy loss of life, including civilians. [25] [26] [27] [28]

Nato forces led by the UK and Canada formally take control of military operations in southern Afghanistan. [29]

Summary

1955- : Rejected by the US Afghanistan develops ties with Moscow which the US later undermines.

1978- : PDP come to power in coup. The regime is generally popular and beneficial, but is opposed in a guerilla war.

1979: The Afghan government seeks help from the Soviets to fight Mujahedeen, whom the US start to support some months prior to Soviet troops arriving.

1988: The Soviets begin their withdrawal. The US backed guerillas continue to fight the Afghan forces.

1993-1994: US backed rebels take over, but Pakistan now fosters the Taliban, who start to defeat the Mujahedeen.

1998: The Taliban now largely control Afghanistan, but are opposed by the Northern Alliance.

2001 onwards: After the 9/11 attacks in New York the US and UK attack Afghanistan. Civilian deaths quickly outstrip those of 9/11. The Taliban are replaced largely with Northern Alliance leaders. For most Afghans life is worse than ever. The Taliban soon start to strike back.

Tibet

1943:

Britain affirms that Tibet is "already self-governing and determined to retain [its] independence". [1]

1946:

The Republic of China recognises the Mongolian People's Republic. [1]

1947:

British mission in Lhasa transferred to a newly independent India. Reting is arrested for plotting to assassinate Regent Taktra. Former Regent Reting dies in prison, apparently poisoned. [1]

1947-49:

Tibetan Trade Mission travels to India, Britain, U.S., and China; the mission is received by the British Prime Minister Attlee. [1]

1949:

People's Republic of China is proclaimed by Chinese Communist Party. New Chinese government affirms recognition of Mongolia. [1]

1950:

Red China invades Tibet; Tibetan army destroyed in battle at Chamdo. [1]

1951:

17 Point Agreement between China and Tibet; Chinese occupy Lhasa. [1]

1955:

Kham is detached from Tibet and administered directly by the CCP. [1]

1956:

Tibetans in Kham and Qinghai (Amdo) begin revolt against CCP rule. [1]

1957:

The United States begins to arm the Tibetan resistance via CIA. [1]

1959:

Anti-Chinese revolt spreads to Lhasa; 14th Dalai Lama flees to India. [1]

1960:

A report by the International Commission of Jurists concludes that, "acts of genocide [have] been committed in Tibet in an attempt to destroy the Tibetans as a religious group." [1]

1962:

China-India War: China advances beyond McMahon Line, then withdraws. [1]

1963:

The Tibetan Government-in-Exile writes a democratic constitution for a future liberated Tibet. [1]

1965:

China sets up Tibet Autonomous Region in U'Tsang and western Kham. [1]

1966-69:

Cultural Revolution: Red Guards rampage destroys most Tibetan temples. [1]

1969:

Fighting among Red Guard factions; PLA intervenes to restore order. [1]

1971:

The United States cuts off military aid to the Tibetan resistance. [1]

1974:

Nepal forces the Tibetan resistance to leave its base in Mustang. [1]

1979:

China allows delegation from Government-in-exile to visit Tibet. [1]

1980:

CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang visits Tibet and promises to "restore the Tibetan economy to its pre-1959 level." [1]

1982:

Solzhenitsyn calls the CCP regime in Tibet "more brutal and inhuman than any other communist regime in the world." [1]

1987:

Police fire on a massive pro-independence demonstration in Lhasa. [1]

1988:

Qiao Shi, China's security chief, visits Tibet and vows to "adopt a policy of merciless repression". [1]

Speaking in Strasbourg, the Dalai Lama makes a "five point" peace plan for a Tibet within China. [1]

1989:

Dalai Lama receives Nobel Peace Prize; martial law imposed in Tibet. [1]

1992:

China declares Tibet "open" to foreign investment. [1]

Chen Kuiyuan is named CCP leader for Tibet and calls for a purge of those party members who "act as internal agents of the Dalai Lama clique". [1]

1993:

Residents of Lhasa protest against price increases and the charging of fees for formally free medical services. [1]

1994:

Potala Palace, DL's traditional residence, is restored and reopened. [1]

1995:

China denounces the six-year old boy recognised by the Dalai Lama as the 11th Panchen Lama, and imposes its own candidate. [1]

1996:

China bans the displaying of photographs of the Dalai Lama. [1]

1999:

October - Chinese premier Jiang Zemin visits Britain. Blair government refuses to raise human rights issues publicly, while police deny protesters the right to peaceful assembly and illegally seize Tibetan flags. [3]

2000:

1st July - In Washington DC thousands of Tibetans and their supporters rallied to urge the World Bank to scrap a plan to resettle some 60,000 poor farmers, many of them Chinese, on traditional Tibetan lands. [2]

7th July - The World Bank cancelled its Chinese resettlement project for Tibet. China then withdrew its request for a \$40 million loan and vowed to proceed with its own development program. [2]

2004:

May – Tony Blair declines to meet with the Dalai Lama "because of diary pressures". [4]

Summary

1943: UK affirms independence.
1947: UK mission moved to India.
1950: Red China invades Tibet.
1955: Kham detached from Tibet.
1956: Tibetans begin revolt.
1957: US arms Tibetan resistance.
1959: Dalai Lama flees.
1966-69: Temples destroyed.
1971: US cuts off aid to resistance.
1974: Nepal forces resistance out.
1979: China allows delegation.
1982: "brutal and inhuman."
1987: Police fire on demonstration.
1988: "merciless repression".
1989: Peace Prize; martial law.
1992: Purge of party members.
1995: Panchen Lama denounced.
1999: Chinese premier visits Britain.
2000: Protest against World Bank.
2004: Blair won't meet Dalai Lama.

China

1945-1949:

After the Second World War and the defeat of the Japanese hostilities between the Nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists, led by Mao Tse-tung, resumed. The U.S. takes the side of Chiang Kai-shek against the Communists, even though the latter had been a much closer ally of the United States in the world war. The U.S. uses defeated Japanese soldiers to fight for its side. The Communists force Chiang to flee to Taiwan in 1949. [4] [5] [6]

1949:

The Chinese Communist Party takes over mainland China. [2]

KMT and Chiang Kai-shek retreat to Taiwan. [2]

Sino-Soviet Alliance. [2]

1950:

Agrarian Law. [2]

Chinese "volunteers" enter the Korean War. [2]

1951:

The Three-Anti, Five-Anti and Thought Reform Campaigns. [2]

1953-1956:

Collectivization begins. [2]

1956-1957:

The "Hundred Flowers" period. [2]

1958:

The Great Leap Forward. [2]

1960:

The USSR withdraws technical advisers from China. [2]

1966:

Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution begins. [2]

1970:

The Universities are reopened. [2]

1971:

PRC is given a seat on the UN Security Council. [2]

1972:

US President Richard Nixon visits China. [2]

1973:

Tenth Party Congress adopts anti- Lin Biao and anti-Confucius campaigns. [2]

1976:

Zhou Enlai dies. [2]

Tiananmen Square riots. [2]

Deng Xiaoping ousted. [2]

Hua Guofeng is made Premier. [2]

Tongshan earthquake. [2]

Mao Zedong dies. [2]

The Gang of Four is arrested. [2]

1977:

Deng Xiaoping is rehabilitated. [2]

1979:

US and PRC establish diplomatic relations. [2]

1980:

"Democracy Wall" is closed down. [2]

1981:

CCP denounces Mao Zedong. [2]

1986-90:

China's "Open-door policy" opens the country to foreign investment and encourages development of a market economy and private sector. [3]

1989:

Troops open fire on demonstrators who have camped for weeks in Tiananmen Square initially to demand the posthumous rehabilitation of former CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang, who was forced to resign in 1987. The official death toll is 200. International outrage leads to sanctions. [3]

Jiang Zemin takes over as Chinese Communist Party general secretary from Zhao Ziyang, who refused to support martial law during the Tiananmen demonstrations. [3]

Stockmarkets open in Shanghai and Shenzhen. [3]

1992:

Russia and China sign declaration restoring friendly ties. [3]

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) ranks China's economy as third largest in the world after the US and Japan. [3]

1993:

Jiang Zemin officially replaces Yang Shangkun as president. [3]

Preliminary construction work on the Three Gorges dam begins. It will create a lake almost 600 kilometres (375 miles) long and submerge dozens of cultural heritage sites by the time it is completed in 2009. [3]

1994:

China abolishes the official renminbi (RMB) currency exchange rate and fixes its first floating rate since 1949. [3]

1995:

China tests missiles and holds military exercises in the Taiwan Strait, apparently to intimidate Taiwan during its presidential elections.[3]

1996:

China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan - dubbed the Shanghai Five - meet in Shanghai and agree to cooperate to combat ethnic and religious tensions in each others' countries. [3]

1997:

Deng Xiaoping dies, aged 92. Rioting erupts in Yining, Xinjiang and on day of Deng's funeral Xinjiang separatists plant three bombs on buses in Urumqi, Xinjiang, killing nine and injuring 74. [3]

Hong Kong reverts to Chinese control. [3]

1998:

Zhu Rongji succeeds Li Peng as premier, announces reforms in the wake of the Asian financial crisis and continued deceleration of the economy. Thousands of state-owned enterprises are to be restructured through amalgamations, share flotations and bankruptcies. About four million civil service jobs to be axed. [3]

Large-scale flooding of the Yangtse, Songhua and Nenjiang rivers. [3]

1999:

NATO bombs the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, souring Sino-US relations. [3]

Falun Gong, a quasi-religious sect, outlawed as a threat to stability. [3]

Fiftieth anniversary of People's Republic of China on 1st October. [3]

Macao reverts to Chinese rule. [3]

October - Chinese premier Jiang Zemin visits Britain. Blair government refuses to raise human rights issues publicly, while police deny protesters the right to peaceful assembly and illegally seize Tibetan flags. [1]

2000:

January - Chinese defence minister, General Chi Haotian, who commanded the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, visits Britain to explore 'military cooperation', showing London's apparent defiance of EU arms embargo on China. [1]

Crackdown on official corruption intensifies, with the execution for bribe taking of a former deputy chairman of the National People's Congress. [3]

The Falun Gong sect continues to defy its ban and holds demonstrations. [3]

Bomb explosion kills up to 60 in Urumqi, Xinjiang. [3]

2001:

China urges US not to supply Taiwan with advanced anti-missile equipment. US says it will go ahead with sales, but won't supply everything on Taiwan's wish list. [3]

April - Diplomatic stand-off over the detention of an American spy plane and crew after a mid-air collision with a Chinese fighter jet. [3]

June - Leaders of China, Russia and four Central Asian states launch the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and sign an agreement to fight ethnic and religious militancy while promoting trade and investment. The group emerges when the Shanghai Five - China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan - are joined by Uzbekistan. [3]

China carries out military exercises simulating an invasion of Taiwan, at the same time as the island's armed forces test their capability to defend Taiwan against a missile attack from China. [3]

November - China is officially admitted as member of the World Trade Organisation. [3]

2002:

February - US President George W Bush visits, on the 30th anniversary of President Nixon's visit to China - the first by a US president. [3]

July - The US says China is modernising its military to make possible a forcible reunification with Taiwan. Beijing says its policy remains defensive. [3]

November - Vice-President Hu Jintao is named head of the ruling Communist Party, replacing Jiang Zemin, the outgoing president. Jiang is re-elected head of the influential Central Military Commission, which oversees the armed forces. [3]

2003:

March - National People's Congress elects Hu Jintao as president. He replaces Jiang Zemin, who steps down after 10 years in the post. [3]

March-April - China and Hong Kong are hit by the pneumonia-like Sars virus, thought to have originated in Guangdong province in November 2002. Strict quarantine measures are enforced to stop the disease spreading. [3]

June - Sluice gates on Three Gorges dam closed to allow reservoir to fill up. Construction of \$25 billion project displaced almost one million people to make way for world's largest hydroelectric scheme. [3]
Hong Kong is declared free of Sars. Days later the World Health Organization lifts its Sars-related travel warning for Beijing. [3]

China, India reach de facto agreement over status of Tibet and Sikkim in landmark cross-border trade agreement. [3]

July/August - Some 500,000 people march in Hong Kong against Article 23, a controversial anti-subversion bill. Two key Hong Kong government officials resign. The government shelves the bill. [3]

October - Launch of China's first manned spacecraft: Astronaut Yang Liwei is sent into space by a Long March 2F rocket. [3]

December - Gas well blast near Chongqing kills more than 230, injures thousands. [3]

2004:

April - Legislators rule out direct elections for Hong Kong leader in 2007. [3]

Summary

1945-1949: After the Second World War the US backs nationalists.

1949: The Chinese Communist Party takes over mainland China.

1960: The USSR withdraws technical advisers from China.

1976: Tiananmen Square riots.

1979: US and PRC establish diplomatic relations.

1989: Troops open fire on demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. Leading to sanctions.

1992: Russia and China restore friendly ties.
1997: Hong Kong reverts to Chinese control.
1999: NATO bombs the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.
Chinese premier Jiang Zemin visits Britain.
2000: Britain and China explore 'military cooperation'.
2001: Detention of a US spy plane and crew.
China admitted as member of the WTO.

South Korea

1945-1953:

After World War II, the United States suppresses the popular progressive forces in favour of the conservatives who had collaborated with the Japanese. This leads to a long era of corrupt, reactionary, and brutal governments. [1]

1961-1979:

US support for the coup and dictatorship of Japanese collaborator and suspected commie General Park Chung He. Elected to office in 1963, declared martial law in 1972 lasting until his assassination. Created the KCIA, an organization 370,000 strong by its third year of existence, the head of which shot Park in the head in 1979. [2]

1980:

US authorizes Kwangju massacre of pro-democracy activists. [2]

Thailand

1976:

US supports military coup, precipitated by the Thammasat Massacre. The CIA had been active in Thailand since the 1950s. Its role there has been described in detail by the agent that lead the Thailand program to new heights. [1]

Laos

1957-1975:

CIA organizes one coup a year between 1957 and 1965. Then it bombs Laos for the next decade. Left behind were some 500,000 corpses, and unexploded bomblets from cluster bombing that continue to kill or maim hundreds to thousands a year. The US government made no effort to help with ordnance clearing projects. [1] [2] [3]

Cambodia

1955-1973:

Prince Sihanouk is yet another leader who does not fancy being an American client. After many years of hostility towards his regime, including assassination plots and the infamous Nixon/Kissinger secret "carpet bombings" of 1969-70, Washington finally overthrows Sihanouk in a coup in 1970. This is all that was needed to impel Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge forces to enter the fray. Five years later, they take power. But five years of American bombing have caused Cambodia's traditional economy to vanish. The old Cambodia has been destroyed forever.

Incredibly, the Khmer Rouge inflict even greater misery on this unhappy land. To add to the irony, the United States support Pol Pot, militarily and diplomatically, after their subsequent defeat by the Vietnamese. [1]

"The fact is that the United States dropped three times the quantity of explosives on Cambodia between 1970 and 1973 than it had dropped on Japan for the duration of World War II. Between 1969 and 1973, 539,129 tons of high explosives rained down on Cambodia; that is more than one billion pounds. This is equivalent to some 15,400 pounds of explosives for every square mile of Cambodian territory. Considering that probably less than 25 percent of the total area of Cambodia was bombed at one time or another, the actual explosive force per area would be at least four times this level." --The Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea, Craig Etcheson [2]

American support for the ouster of Sihanouk (viewed by the rural populace as the father of the country), in a coup by General Lon Nol and the subsequent invasion of Cambodia by U.S. troops in April 1970 prompted a backlash that strengthened support for the insurgent Khmer Rouge (KR) guerrillas. --Phil Robertson, Foreign Policy in Focus, December 1997. [2]

1978- :

Invaded by Vietnam in 1978, the genocidal "communist" Khmer Rouge regime of Cambodia receives assistance from the US government and which implicit in their rise to power in the first place. Humanitarian aide organizations are pressured by the US into providing assistance to Khmer Rouge guerillas using refugee camps as bases of operation.

In 1989 the US congress passes a bill prohibiting lethal aid to Pol Pot. In response the US administration begins directing arms shipments to the Khmer Rouge through Singapore. [2]

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Vietnam

1858-93:

French conquer the area of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Re-name it French Union of Indo-China. [2]

1930:

Ho Chi Minh founds Indochina Communist Party to resist French rule. Goes into exile in the Soviet Union and China after the Party is savagely suppressed. [2]

1940-1:

After France surrenders to Germany, Japan, Germany's ally, takes control of Indochina, ruling jointly with the Vichy French. Ho Chi Minh returns to lead resistance to the Japanese and French. Sets up the Vietminh - League for Vietnamese Independence. Though led by communists, it attracts many nationalists. [2]

1941-45:

Vietminh lead the fight against the Japanese, supported by the US, which supplies them with weapons. When France is liberated, the Japanese imprison French troops. In 1945, when the Japanese surrender after Hiroshima, the Vietminh, who are based in the north, take over Hanoi and declare the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Ho persuades emperor Bao Dai to abdicate, due to his associations with the Japanese. Ho Chi Minh hopes for US support against the French. [2] [4]

British troops arrive in Saigon from Burma. They aim to restore French colonial rule. They rearm Japanese troops and use them to drive the Vietminh out of Saigon and the south. The French re-establish colonial rule in the south. [2]

French General Leclerc says "I didn't come back to Indochina to give Indochina back to the Indochinese." [5]

During this year and the next, Vietminh leader Ho Chi Minh writes at least eight letters to US president Truman and the State Department asking for US help in winning Vietnamese independence from the French. He writes that world peace is being endangered by French efforts to reconquer Indochina and he requests that the "four powers" (US, USSR, China and UK) intervene in order to mediate a fair settlement and bring the Indochinese issue before the UN. He is ignored. [5]

1946:

France recognizes Vietnam as a "free state" within the French Union. French troops replace Chinese in the North.

Following months of steadily deteriorating relations, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam launches its first concerted attack against the French. [3]

The French fight the Vietminh for control of the north. They drive the Vietminh out of Hanoi. But the French fare badly in the war against the Vietminh as their highly successful leader, General Giap, employs Maoist guerrilla tactics. In France, there is a lack of enthusiasm and funds for the war. [2]

1947:

French General Etienne Valluy attempts, and fails, to wipe out the Vietminh in one stroke. [3]

1949:

Bao Dai and President Vincent Auriol of France sign the Elysee Agreement. As part of the agreement the French pledge to assist in the building of a national anti-Communist army. [3]

1949-50:

Communist forces triumph in China and give military aid to the Vietminh. France turns to the US for aid, claiming it is a war against Chinese communist expansionism rather than a colonial war. After the US becomes embroiled in the Korean War, fighting North Korea and then the Chinese, it begins to supply military aid to the French. [2] US Secretary of State Dean Acheson tells French officials that the US government is set against France negotiating with their Northern based Vietnamese foes, the Vietminh. [5] The United States sends \$15 million dollars in military aid to the French for the war in Indochina. Included in the aid package is a military mission and military advisors. [3]

1952:

The US exerts strong pressure on France not to pursue peace feelers extended by the Vietminh and a French delegation, scheduled to meet with Vietminh negotiators in Burma is hastily recalled to Paris. Thereafter the US threatens to cease economic and military aid to the French if they negotiate with the Vietminh. [5]

1953:

France grants Laos full independence. Vietminh forces push into Laos. [3]

The CIA helps air lift 16,000 men into a fortified French base in a valley in the North called Dien Bien Phu. The CIA later flies in supplies when the base is surrounded and cut off. [5]

1954:

The Americans are funding 80% of the French war, over \$1 billion per year. After a disastrous defeat at Dien Bien Phu, the French decide to withdraw from Indochina. Peace talks take place in Geneva. The US National Security Council urges Eisenhower "to inform Paris that French acquiescence in a Communist take over of Indochina would bear on its status as one of the Big Three" and that "US aid to France would automatically cease". The US contemplates military intervention including the use of nuclear weapons. In order to try and the non-communist side at the Geneva talks, the CIA disseminates false news items claiming that the Chinese are giving full armed support to the Vietminh. [2] [5]

July - The Geneva Agreement states that the country will be temporarily divided at the 17th parallel. The Vietminh will withdraw north of this line, the French south. Ho Chi Minh's government is recognised as the government of independent North Vietnam; the French remain temporarily in South Vietnam. Free elections to be held in July 1956 across both zones will decide the future government of a united Vietnam. In the meantime, neither zone to accept outside military help, foreign troops or join any military alliance. Laos and Cambodia to become free, independent and neutral. [2]

The agreement was signed by France, Britain, China, the Soviet Union and the Vietminh. The South Vietnamese were represented by the French. The US did not approve the agreement, and was not a signatory. However, Washington undertook not to upset it by force or threat of force. [2] [5]

September - US forms SEATO - an anti-Communist alliance of Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Pakistan and the Philippines - and extends protection to Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam, thus undermining the Geneva Accord. President Eisenhower sends an undercover CIA team to Vietnam to disrupt and weaken the North. They engage in a campaign of military and psychological warfare under the direction of the CIA's Edward Lansdale and begin to make preparations for future war. The US also begins an economic boycott against the North Vietnamese and threatens to blacklist French firms which are doing business with them. [2] [5]

1955:

Ngo Dinh Diem, a wealthy Catholic anti-Communist, rejects conditions of Geneva accords and refuses to participate in Nationwide elections. Diem, like Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles, knows that in any national election Ho Chi Minh is sure to win. The US State Department and National Security Council make

it clear to Diem that they want the elections postponed for as long as possible. It is this support that enables Diem to scrap the nationwide elections without the fear of action by Vietminh forces. Diem defeats Bao Dai in a rigged referendum and proclaims himself President of Republic of Vietnam. [2] [5]

Diem is opposed by virtually all sectors of South Vietnamese society, but is backed by Washington and the CIA. He establishes a corrupt, ruthless, authoritarian regime which discriminates against the Buddhist majority and does not tolerate any opposition. [2] [3] [5]

1956:

The French leave Vietnam. The US Military Assistance Advisor Group (MAAG) takes over training South Vietnamese government forces. This includes a covert program set up the previous year at Michigan State University for training South Vietnamese police. [3][5]

Deadline for nationwide elections set at Geneva Convention passes. No elections are held. [3] [5]

1957:

Vietnamese insurgent activity in South Vietnam begins. Thirty-seven armed companies are organized along the Mekong Delta. [3]

Thirteen Americans working for MAAG and US Information Service are wounded in bombings in Saigon. [3]

1958:

Vietnamese forces settle along the Mekong Delta. [3]

1959:

North Vietnam forms Group 559 to begin moving cadres and weapons into South Vietnam via the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The Trail will become a strategic target for future military attacks. [3]

Diem orders crackdown on Communists and dissidents. [3]

1960:

North Vietnam imposes universal military conscription.

Diem survives coup attempt. [3]

Groups opposing Diem form the National Liberation Front to overthrow Diem and the US presence by force. Though led by communists, the NLF is an alliance of Buddhists, nationalists and peasants. Diem dubs them the Viet Cong (Vietnamese Communists) and requests US aid to fight them. Ho Chi Minh sends aid to the NLF. [2]

1961:

400 guerillas attack village in Kienhoa Province, and are defeated by South Vietnamese government troops. [3]

During a tour of Asian countries, Vice President Lyndon Johnson visits Diem in Saigon. Johnson assures Diem that he is crucial to US objectives in Vietnam and calls him "the Churchill of Asia." [3]

President Kennedy authorizes "Green Berets," -- a Special Forces operation activated at Fort Bragg, NC. The Special Forces will specialize in counterinsurgency. [3]

As US atrocities mount in the war that follows, Britain secretly provides US with military intelligence, arms and covert SAS deployments, along with diplomatic support. [1]

1962:

President Kennedy increases the number of military advisors from 800 to 16,000. [2]

During the 1960's the CIA runs drug operations from Laos. Opium and heroine is flown all over Indochina to serve the personal and entrepreneurial needs of the CIA's various military and political allies, ultimately turning numerous GIs in Vietnam into addicts. [5]

US Air Force begins using Agent Orange -- a defoliant that came in metal orange containers-to expose roads and trails used by Vietcong forces.

Diem palace bombed in coup attempt. [3]

Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield reports back to JFK from Saigon his opinion that Diem had wasted the two billion dollars America had spent there. [3]

1963:

Drawing on the British practise of "villageisation" in Malaya, US forces herd thousands of Vietnamese into "strategic hamlets" akin to concentration camps. The UK government gives its support for this. [1]

Vietcong units defeat South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) in Battle of Ap Bac. [3]

Tensions between Buddhists and the Diem government are further strained as Diem, a Catholic, removes Buddhists from several key government positions and replaces them with Catholics. Buddhist monks protest Diem's intolerance for other religions and the measures he takes to silence them. In a show of protest, Buddhist monks start setting themselves on fire in public places. [3]

With tacit approval of the United States, operatives within the South Vietnamese military overthrow Diem. He and his brother Nhu are shot and killed in the aftermath. [3] [5]

President Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas. Kennedy's death meant that the problem of how to proceed in Vietnam fell squarely into the lap of his vice president, Lyndon Johnson. [3]

1964:

In a bloodless coup, General Nguyen Khanh seizes power in Saigon. South Vietnam junta leader, Major General Duong Van Minh, is placed under house arrest, but is allowed to remain as a figurehead chief-of-state. [3]

August - On August 2, three North Vietnamese PT boats allegedly fire torpedoes at the USS Maddox, a destroyer located in the international waters of the Tonkin Gulf, some thirty miles off the coast of North Vietnam. The alleged attack comes after six months of covert US and South Vietnamese naval operations. A second attack is alleged to have taken place on August 4. It is all a fake to justify US military intervention. [3] [5] [10]

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution is approved by Congress on August 7 and authorizes President Lyndon Johnson to "take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." The resolution passes unanimously in the House, and by a margin of 82-2 in the Senate. The Resolution allows Johnson to wage all out war against North Vietnam without ever securing a formal Declaration of War from Congress. [3]

Vietcong attacks Bienhoa air base. [3]

October - US forces bomb Cambodian villages near the South Vietnamese border in pursuit of North Vietnamese and Vietcong. [5]

Lyndon Johnson is elected in a landslide over Republican Barry Goldwater of Arizona. During the campaign, Johnson's position on Vietnam appeared to lean toward de-escalation of US involvement, and sharply contrasted the more militant views held by Goldwater.[3]

1965:

February - Sustained American bombing raids of North Vietnam, dubbed Operation Rolling Thunder, begins. The nearly continuous air raids would go on for three years. [3]

Soviet Union supplies aid and weapons to the North and the North sends 14,000 PAVN (People's Army of Vietnam) troops south to help the NLF. [2]

February - The US stages the fake capture of a boat carrying communist bloc arms to the Vietcong, in order to give the impression of outside support being given to the Vietcong/NLF. [5]

May - Cambodia severs diplomatic relations with the US after US forces bomb more Cambodian villages. [5]

US journalists are told that it is their patriotic duty to only disseminate information that makes the US look good. [5]

The first American combat troops, the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, arrive in Vietnam to defend the US airfield at Danang. Scattered Vietcong gunfire is reported, but no Marines are injured. [3]

The first conventional battle of the Vietnam war takes place as American forces clash with North Vietnamese units in the Ia Drang Valley. The US 1st Air Cavalry Division employs its newly enhanced technique of aerial reconnaissance to finally defeat the NVA, although heavy casualties are reported on both sides. [3]

US troop levels top 200,000. [3]

March - The practice, in the US, of protesting US policy in Vietnam by holding "teach-ins" at colleges and universities becomes widespread. The first "teach-in" -- featuring seminars, rallies, and speeches -- takes place at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in March. In May, a nationally broadcast "teach-in" reaches students and faculty at over 100 campuses. [3]

1966:

In an effort to disrupt movement along the Mugia Pass -- the main route used by the NVA to send personnel and supplies through Laos and into South Vietnam -- American B-52s bomb North Vietnam for the first time. [3]

South Vietnam government troops take Hue and Danang. [3]

Despite the US rhetoric of fighting communist encroachment in Indochina the Soviet Union supplies the US with \$2 million worth of magnesium and China supplies the US with several thousand tons of steel. This at a time when the US is maintaining various embargoes against communist nations. [5]

US President Lyndon Johnson meets with South Vietnamese Premier Nguyen Cao Ky and his military advisors in Honolulu. In keeping with US government rhetoric Johnson promises to continue to help South Vietnam fend off aggression from the North, but adds that the US will be monitoring South Vietnam's efforts to expand democracy and improve economic conditions for its citizens. [3]

Veterans from World Wars I and II, along with veterans from the Korean war stage a protest rally in New York City. Discharge and separation papers are burned in protest of US involvement in Vietnam. [3]

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) issues a report claiming that the US military draft places "a heavy discriminatory burden on minority groups and the poor." The group also calls for a withdrawal of all US troops from Vietnam. [3]

1967:

In a major ground war effort dubbed Operation Cedar Falls, about 16,000 US and 14,000 South Vietnamese government troops set out to destroy Vietcong operations and supply sites near Saigon. A massive system of tunnels is discovered in an area called the Iron Triangle, an apparent headquarters for Vietcong personnel. [3]

Calling the US "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world," Martin Luther King publicly speaks out against US policy in Vietnam. King later encourages draft evasion and suggests a merger between antiwar and civil rights groups. [3]

University of Wisconsin students demand that corporate recruiters for Dow Chemical -- producers of napalm -- not be allowed on campus. [3]

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, appearing before a Senate subcommittee, testifies that US bombing raids against North Vietnam have not achieved their objectives. McNamara maintains that movement of supplies to South Vietnam has not been reduced, and neither the economy nor the morale of the North Vietnamese has been broken. [3]

By 1967, there are 525,000 US troops in Vietnam and two million refugees. [2]

In 1967, after a succession of short-lived military governments, General Thieu becomes president of South Vietnam and remains until 1975. [2]

1968:

Between 1968 and 1971 the US operates the Phoenix Program under which thousands of Vietnamese civilians are arrested on the chance that they may be supporters Vietcong. Torture and murder are commonplace under this program as they had been under similar ones operating since 1965. The US figure for those killed under this program is 20,587. The South Vietnamese government figure is 40,994. [5] [6] [23]

In a show of military might that catches the US military off guard, North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces sweep down upon several key cities and provinces in South Vietnam, including its capital, Saigon. Within days, American forces turn back the onslaught and recapture most areas. From a military point of view, Tet is a huge defeat for the North Vietnamese and Vietcong, but turns out to be a political and psychological victory. The US military's assessment of the war is questioned and the "end of tunnel" seems very far off. [3]

The Battle for Hue wages for 26 days as US and South Vietnamese government forces try to recapture the site seized by the North Vietnamese and Vietcong during the Tet Offensive. Previously, a religious retreat in the middle of a war zone, Hue was nearly leveled in a battle that left nearly all of its population homeless. Following the US and ARVN victory, mass graves allegedly containing the bodies of thousands of people who had been executed during the North Vietnamese occupation are discovered. [3] In fact this widely promulgated story is a fabrication by the South Vietnamese government, promoted by the US. Most, if not all, of the dead were killed during the fighting and were not executed at all. [24]

General Westmoreland requests 206,000 more troops, president Johnson refuses. [3]

March - On March 16, the men of Charlie Company, 11th Brigade, Americal Division entered the village of My Lai. "This is what you've been waiting for -- search and destroy -- and you've got it," said their superior officers. A short time later the killing began. When news of the atrocities surfaced, it sent shockwaves through the US political establishment, the military's chain of command, and an already divided American public. [3]

Later revelations show that My Lai was the tip of the iceberg. There were many other incidents of massacres, killings, rapes and torture, which went unpunished. Such crimes were not perpetrated by just a few rogue units, but by parts of every army division operating in Vietnam. Furthermore official documents show that it was policy to include many populated areas of Vietnam in the so called "free fire zones", wherein anyone and everyone was considered as a legitimate target. [11] [18]

With his popularity plummeting and dismayed by Senator Eugene McCarthy's strong showing in the New Hampshire primary, President Lyndon Johnson stuns the nation and announces that he will not be a candidate for re-election. [3]

April - Martin Luther King is slain in Memphis. [3]

May - Following a lengthy period of debate and discussion, North Vietnamese and American negotiators agree on a location and start date of peace talks. Talks are slated to begin in Paris on May 10 with W. Averell Harriman representing the United States, and former Foreign Minister Xuan Thuy heading the North Vietnamese delegation. [3]

As the frazzled Democratic party prepares to hold its nominating convention in Chicago, city officials gear up for a deluge of demonstrations. Mayor Richard Daley orders police to crackdown on antiwar protests. As the nation watched on television, the area around the convention erupts in violence. [3] By now the US administration is concerned that it may need troops for controlling civil unrest and it may not have enough if more are sent to Vietnam. [7]

Running on a platform of "law and order," Richard Nixon barely beats out Hubert Humphrey for the presidency. Nixon takes just 43.4 percent of the popular vote, compared to 42.7 percent for Humphrey. Third-party candidate George Wallace takes the remaining percentage of votes. [3]

1969:

In an effort to destroy North Vietnamese and Vietcong supply routes and base camps in Cambodia, President Nixon gives the go-ahead to "Operation Breakfast." The covert bombing of Cambodia, conducted without the knowledge of Congress or the American public, will continue for fourteen months. [3] [2] [5] Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird describes a policy of "Vietnamization" when discussing a diminishing role for the US military in Vietnam. The objective of the policy is to shift the burden of defeating the North Vietnamese and Vietcong onto the South Vietnamese Army and away from the United States. US continues to provide aid, advice and air support. [3] [2]

Ho Chi Minh dies at Age 79 and is succeeded by Le Duan. [3] [2]

Through the reporting of journalist Seymour Hersh, Americans read for the first time of the atrocities committed by Lt. William Calley and his troops in the village of My Lai. At the time the reports were made public, the Army had already charged Calley with the crime of murder. [3] [2]

Massive antiwar demonstration in Washington DC. [3] [2]

1970:

March - Prince Sihanouk's attempt to maintain Cambodia's neutrality while war waged in neighboring Vietnam forced him to strike opportunistic alliances with China, and then the United States. Such vacillating weakened his government, leading to a coup orchestrated by his defense minister, Lon Nol. [3] [5] Within hours of the coup US and South Vietnam government forces establish communication with Cambodian commanders and begin military cooperation against Vietcong forces in Cambodia. [5] The deployment of about 14,000 US troops in Cambodia is kept secret by Nixon. [9] National Guardsmen open fire on a crowd of student antiwar protesters at Ohio's Kent State University, resulting in the death of four students and the wounding of eight others. President Nixon publicly deplores the actions of the Guardsmen, but cautions: "...when dissent turns to violence it invites tragedy." Several of the protesters had been hurling rocks and empty tear gas canisters at the Guardsmen. [3] Kissinger and Le Duc Tho begin secret talks. [3] Number of US troops in Vietnam falls to 280 000. [3]

1971:

A legacy of deception, concerning US policy in Vietnam, on the part of the military and the executive branch is revealed as the New York Times publishes the Pentagon Papers. The Nixon administration, eager to stop leaks of what they consider sensitive information, appeals to the Supreme Court to halt the publication. The Court decides in favour of the Times and allows continued publication. [3] In a move that troubles the North Vietnamese, President Nixon announces his intention to visit The People's Republic of China. Nixon's gesture toward China is seen by the North Vietnamese as an effort to create discord between themselves and their Chinese allies. [3] Thieu re-elected in South Vietnam. [3]

Telford Taylor the chief US prosecutor at Nuremberg strongly suggests that General William Westmoreland and high officials of the Johnson administration such as Robert McNamara and Dean Rusk could be found guilty of war crimes under criteria established at Nuremberg. But no US court or judge is willing to accept the Nuremberg principles as a defense for those who refused the US war draft. [5]

1972:

Responding to charges by Democratic presidential candidates that he is not moving fast enough to end US involvement in Vietnam, President Nixon orders troop strength reduced by seventy thousand. [3] Secret peace talks revealed. [3]

In an attempt to force North Vietnam to make concessions in the ongoing peace talks, the Nixon administration orders heavy bombing of supply dumps and petroleum storage sites in and around Hanoi and Haiphong. The administration makes it clear to the North Vietnamese that no section of Vietnam is off-limits to bombing raids. [3]

June - Break-in at Watergate Hotel. [3]

The town of Hongai is bombed. Hongai is one of the first places to be bombed with a "pellet bomb", the prototype of the cluster bomb.[6]

Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho reach agreement in principle on several key measures leading to a cease-fire in Vietnam. Kissinger's view that "peace is at hand," is dimmed somewhat by South Vietnamese President Thieu's opposition to the agreement. [3]

1973:

A cease-fire agreement that, in the words of Richard Nixon, "brings peace with honor in Vietnam and Southeast Asia," is signed in Paris by Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. The agreement is to go into effect on January 28. [3]

Under the agreement the US agrees to fund reconstruction in Vietnam to the amount of \$3.25 billion. In fact the US gives nothing and imposes a complete embargo on trade and assistance, which lasts until 1994. [5] The Vietnamese are simply left to deal with all the suffering and destruction. [16]

August - The Senate Armed Services Committee opens hearing on the US bombing of Cambodia. Allegations are made that the Nixon administration allowed bombing raids to be carried out during what was

supposed to be a time when Cambodia's neutrality was officially recognized. As a result of the hearings, Congress orders that all bombing in Cambodia cease effective at midnight, August 14.[3]

The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to Henry Kissinger of the United States and Le Duc Tho of North Vietnam. Kissinger accepts the award, while Tho declines, saying that a true peace does not yet exist in Vietnam. [3]

1974:

US bombers continue to destroy South Vietnam in support of the ARVN. Many US 'advisors' remain to assist and direct ARVN. [2]

According to a report issued by The National Academy of Science, use of chemical herbicides during the war caused long-term damage to the ecology of Vietnam. Subsequent inquiries will focus on the connection between certain herbicides, particularly Agent Orange, and widespread reports of cancer, skin disease, and other disorders on the part of individuals exposed to them. [3] [5]

North Vietnamese and Vietcong take Mekong Delta territory. [3]

May - Impeachment hearings against President Richard Nixon are begun by the House Judiciary Committee. Among the articles of impeachment introduced is a resolution condemning Nixon for the secret bombing of Cambodia. [3]

Nixon resigns. [3]

With North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces in the South believed to be at their highest levels ever, South Vietnamese leaders gird themselves for an expected offensive of significant proportions. [3]

1975:

The South Vietnamese Army loses twenty planes in a failed effort to defend Phuoc Long, a key province just north of Saigon. North Vietnamese leaders interpret the US's complete lack of response to the siege as an indication that they could move more aggressively in the South. [2] [3]

Congress refuses President Ford's request for further funds to support the South Vietnamese government . ARVN collapses without US support. In March, Hue and Danang fall and the PAVN presses on to Saigon. [2] [3]

The North Vietnamese and Vietcong initiate the Ho Chi Minh Campaign -- a concerted effort to "liberate" Saigon. Under the command of General Dung, the NVA sets out to capture Saigon by late April, in advance of the rainy season. [2] [3]

April - The Khmer Rouge accept the surrender of Cambodian leader Lon Nol on April 16. The Khmer Rouge's victory ends five years of fighting in Cambodia and ushers in a period of genocide and forced "re-education" engineered by Pol Pot. [2] [3] [5]

Anticipating the fall of Saigon to North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces, US President Gerald Ford, speaking in New Orleans, announces that as far as the US is concerned, the Vietnam War is "finished." [2] [3]

South Vietnamese President Duong Van Minh delivers an unconditional surrender to the North Vietnamese in the early hours of April 30. North Vietnamese Colonel Bui Tin accepts the surrender and assures Minh that, "...Only the Americans have been beaten. If you are patriots, consider this a moment of joy." As the remaining Americans evacuate Saigon (about 8000), the last two US servicemen to die in Vietnam are killed when their helicopter crashes. [2] [3]

Perhaps five million people died during the Vietnam war, the great majority of them civilians. [20]

1976-80:

As the National Assembly meets in July of 1976, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam names Pham Van Dong its prime minister. Van Dong and his fellow government leaders, all but one of whom are former North Vietnamese officials, take up residence in the nation's new capital--Hanoi. [3] [2]

Capitalism is virtually abolished in favour of state planning, public ownership and centralised control. [3] [2]

Initially, impressive progress was made. In Saigon, renamed Ho Chi Minh City, slums were cleared and thousands of unemployed ex-ARVN troops were set to work. [3] [2]

Many improvements in education and healthcare are made. [3] [2]

However, in the South alone, leftover mines and unexploded bombs killed another 10,000 Vietnamese in the post-war decade. [3] [2]

The population booms. In 1976-78 the rice crops fail. Typhoons also damage agriculture making food shortages worse. [3] [2]

Vietnam granted admission to United Nations. [3] [2]

Relations between Vietnam and China deteriorate. [3] [2]

Determined to overthrow the government of Pol Pot, Vietnam invades Cambodia. Phnompenh, Cambodia's capital, falls quickly as Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge followers flee into the jungles. [3] [2]

To punish Vietnam for invading Cambodia, the European Community banned the export of powdered milk, exacerbating malnutrition in under fives. [3] [2]

Swarms of Vietnamese refugees take to the sea in overcrowded and unsafe boats in search of a better life. The ranks of the "boat people" include individuals deemed enemies of the state who've been expelled from their homeland. [3] [2]

China invades, then withdraws from, Vietnam. [3] [2]

After years of Defense Department denials, the US General Accounting Office releases a report indicating that thousands of US troops were exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange. Thousands of veterans had demanded a government investigation into the effect that dioxin, a chemical found in Agent Orange, had on the human immune system. [3] [2] [5]

1981-85:

Documents used as part of a lawsuit brought by 20,000 Vietnam veterans against several chemical companies reveal that Dow Chemical had full knowledge of the serious health risks posed by human exposure to dioxin, a chemical found in the herbicide Agent Orange. Evidence indicated that despite this information, Dow continued to sell herbicides to the US military for use in Vietnam. [3] [2]

It is estimated that 700,000 people left Vietnam by the mid-eighties. Many failed to find homes abroad and ended up spending years in detention camps because no country was prepared to accept them. [3] [2]

By the mid-eighties, the economy was in crisis. The government's reserves were insufficient, so it resorted to printing money. With inflation rising to 700%, the currency was becoming worthless. [3] [2]

With an estimated per capita income of around \$150, Vietnam was one of the poorest countries in the world. Denied access to world capital, export markets and modern technology, the Vietnamese economy faced a slow death. [3] [2]

US Offers asylum to Vietnamese political prisoners. [3] [2]

An offensive launched against refugee Khmer Rouge rebels spills over the Thai border and eventually comes to involve Thai troops. The Vietnamese are successful in suppressing the rebels and solidify their hold on Cambodia despite criticism from neighboring countries and the United Nations. [3] [2]

1986-90:

In 1986, faced with mounting criticism from within the Communist Party and public discontent over shortages and rising prices, the Politburo, who had led the country for forty years, resigns en masse. [2]

They are succeeded by the reformers within the Party. [2]

In December 1986, at the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party, the new leadership began a far-reaching programme of economic and social change. [2]

The country was desperate for international capital. To obtain it, Vietnam adopted the restructuring policies which had been urged by the IMF and World Bank. [2]

The government stabilised the currency, put an end to the subsidised economy and introduced 'socialist business accounting' - capitalist management methods - in state enterprises. [2]

To woo foreign investors, the reforms included an exceptionally liberal code of practice, allowing 100% foreign ownership, low taxes and guaranteed repatriation of profits. [2]

Vietnam had promised to pull its troops out of Cambodia by the end of the decade and, by 1989, the bulk of them had gone. [2]

1991:

October - Talks began in Paris and in October a peace accord is signed between the Vietnamese backed government in Phnom Penh and a US backed coalition of guerrilla groups, dominated by the Khmer Rouge. [2]

There was to be a ceasefire followed by UN supervised elections in 1993. A summit meeting with the Chinese in November 1991 marked an improvement in relations and border links with China were reopened. [2]

By the early nineties, the social costs of 'doi moi' were becoming increasingly apparent. As state enterprises collapsed and the civil service was retrenched, unemployment climbed to around 7 million. [2]

Free market socialism had been based on the delusion that the massive growth of a new consumer class could bring prosperity to all. [2]

June - Nguyen Van Linh and six other Politburo members retire. There is no change in direction. The new leaders are Van Linh's proteges and continue the free market policies. [2]

Foreign businessmen fill the hotels of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Many countries see the potential for profits in Vietnam and lose patience with the American embargo. Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong lead the field. [2]

By the early nineties, US corporations are lobbying their government to lift the embargo. They are frantic to get into Vietnam in time to catch up with their Japanese and European competitors. [2]

1992:

December - President Bush allows US firms to sign contracts in anticipation of the rescinding of the ban. [2]

1993:

July - President Clinton withdraws US objections to international loans and the IMF, World Bank and Asian Development Bank approve credits and loans totalling \$721 million. [2]

November - Japan and Western donor nations pledge \$1.9 billion in aid. [2]

1994:

February - The embargo is finally ended. America's attempt to isolate and impoverish Vietnam ends as ignominiously as had the war. There is no apology. [2]

Clinton justified lifting the ban by claiming that 'it offers us the best way of resolving the fate of those who remain missing'. More than half the American population still clung to the belief that there were American prisoners of war alive in Vietnam. [2]

The Vietnamese still suffer the consequences of the war in their economy, infrastructure and poisoning from chemicals used by US forces. [2]

1995:

Vietnam and US restore full diplomatic relations. Vietnam becomes full member of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean). [19] Rich nations prepare to exploit Vietnam's poverty. [20]

1997:

Le Kha Phieu becomes party leader. Tran Duc Luong chosen as president, Phan Van Khai becomes prime minister. [19]

1998:

A senior party member, Pham The Duet, faces charges of corruption. Economic growth slumps in the wake of the Asian financial crisis. [19]

1999:

A former high-ranking party member, Tran Do, is expelled after calling for more democracy and freedom of expression. [19]

2000:

US President Bill Clinton pays a three-day official visit. The US pledges more help to clear landmines left over from the Vietnam war. The Vietnamese government estimates nearly 40,000 people have been killed by unexploded munitions. [19] In reality the US government has done nothing to help alleviate the suffering

caused by the Vietnam war, but has spent millions of dollars looking for the bone fragments US pilots downed during the war. And Western institutions such as the World Bank and IMF have only facilitated the exploitation of the Vietnamese people. [20] [21]

2001:

December - US, Vietnam implement a trade agreement which normalises the trade status between them. [19]

2002:

May - Russia hands back the Cam Ranh Bay naval base, once the largest Soviet base outside the Warsaw Pact. [19]

National Assembly elections return a victory for the ruling Communist Party. No opposition parties contest the poll. [19]

July - President Tran Duc Luong reappointed for second term by National Assembly, which also reappoints Prime Minister Phan Van Khai for second five-year term. [19]

2003:

November - First US warship to visit since the Vietnam War sails into port near Ho Chi Minh City. [19]

2004:

December - First US commercial flight since the end of the Vietnam War touches down in Ho Chi Minh City. [19]

2005:

June - Prime Minister Phan Van Khai makes the first visit to the US by a Vietnamese leader since the end of the Vietnam War. [19]

2006:

May - A group of Vietnamese attempts to sue US chemical manufacturers Dow Chemicals and Monsanto Corp for their part in the manufacture of Agent Orange used in the Vietnam war. [8]

2007:

Vietnam joins the WTO, but it's human rights record remains poor. [12] [15]

February - The US pledges \$400,000 towards a study into the removal of dioxin from the soil at the Da Nang international airport, but still disputes a link between spraying the chemical from the air and ill health. [13] [17]

June - The battle for compensation for those suffering from the effects of Agent Orange continues. [14]
President Nguyen Minh Triet makes first visit to the US by a Vietnamese head of state since the Vietnam War ended in 1975. [19]

Summary

1858-93: French conquest and rule.

1940-45: Japan takes over. Vietminh declare independence after Japanese leave. UK restores French rule in south.

1946-1954: France fights Vietminh. From 1949 China backs Vietminh, US backs French.

1954-1956: French defeated. Vietnam divided into North and South. US undermines peace. French leave.

1957 onwards: Rule in South opposed by North and internally.

1961-1962: US and UK back South. US atrocities commence.

1964-1975: US fakes Gulf of Tonkin incident to justify war; conducts vast bombing of North; later bombs and invades Cambodia; commits atrocities and is finally driven out.

1976-: Vietnam suffers the after effects of a brutal war and struggles to recover; invades Cambodia to overthrow Pol Pot and is briefly invaded by China. The IMF and World Bank make things worse whilst foreign firms make a profit.

Philippines

1890s:

Beginnings of insurrection against Spanish rule. [1]

1898:

During the Spanish-American War, the US navy destroys the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. Spain cedes the Philippines to the US under the Treaty of Paris in December. The US proclaims military rule. [1] [2] [5]

1899:

Resistance to US occupation is savagely repressed.

To this day, the total number of Filipinos killed during the war is hotly debated. Some 16,000 to 20,000 Filipino soldiers were killed from 1899-1902. Estimates of the number of civilians who died from famine, disease and other war-related causes during these years range from 200,000 to 600,000. These figures do not include the number of Filipinos who died during the warfare in the southern Philippines that continued until 1914. Of the nearly 200,000 U.S. soldiers who served in the Philippines from 1898 to 1902, only about 5,000 were killed. Highlighting a similarly glaring difference in casualty figures in a speech given in 1902, Twain exclaimed: "This is not battle, for only one side is engaged -- it has another name. It is massacre." [3]

The US military government licenses brothels for its soldiers. [4]

1901:

Leader of insurgents, Emilio Aguinaldo, is captured. [1]

1902:

US civil government replaces military rule. [1]

1907:

A Philippine assembly is inaugurated. [1]

1935:

A plebiscite approves the establishment of the Commonwealth of the Philippines. Manuel Quezon is the first president. The Philippines is promised full independence within 10 years. [1]

1941:

Japan attacks the Philippines by air and invades two weeks later. [1]

1944:

US forces retake the islands. [1]

1945-53:

U.S. military fights against leftist forces (Huks) even while the Huks are still fighting against the Japanese invaders. After the war, the U. S. continues its fight against the Huks, defeating them, and

then installing a series of puppets as president, culminating in the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. [6]
[8]

1946:

The islands are granted nominal independence, but the US retains sovereignty over dozens of military bases and imposes heavy constraints on trade via the Bell Act. The terms of the Bell Act are so onerous that even the U.S. State Department opposes them. One official describes the law as "clearly inconsistent with the basic foreign economic policy of this country" and a betrayal of "our promise to grant the Philippines genuine independence." [7]

1947:

The US is awarded military bases on the islands. [1]

These bases are used for operations in Indonesia, Vietnam, China and others. [9]

1951:

Peace treaty signed with Japan. The Philippines eventually receive 800 million dollars in reparations payments. [1]

1965:

Ferdinand Marcos becomes president. [1]

1965-1986:

Marcos is supported by successive US governments. He supports the US action in Vietnam and the US help him fight Filipino insurgents. [10]

1969:

Marcos is re-elected amidst allegations of electoral fraud. Marcos supports the US policy in Vietnam. There are protests against this. Muslim separatists in the south of the country also begin their campaign of guerrilla war. [1]

1972:

Marcos declares martial law. The parliament is suspended, opposition politicians are arrested, censorship is imposed. [1]

1973:

A new constitution gives Marcos absolute powers. [1]

1977:

Opposition leader Benigno Aquino is sentenced to death. Marcos delays the execution. [1]

1980:

Aquino allowed to travel to the US for medical treatment. [1]

In the 1980's Marcos gives Ronald Reagan millions of dollars to help fund his election campaigns. [11]

1981:

Martial law is lifted. Marcos wins presidential elections. [1]

1983:

Aquino returns to the Philippines, but is shot dead as he leaves his plane. The military is blamed for the murder. [1]

1986:

Presidential elections see Marcos opposed by Aquino's widow, Corazon. Marcos declares himself the winner, but Aquino disputes the result. There are mass protests, dubbed "people power", in Manila. The military withdraws its support for Marcos. The new government claims Marcos had looted billions of dollars from the country during his time in power. [1]

The US government takes Marcos to safety in Hawaii. [12]

Under Aquino human rights abuses continue and dictates of the US are still followed. [12]

1989:

December - US jets assist Philippine government forces in suppressing an attempted coup. [1]

1990:

Military officials are convicted of the murder of Benigno Aquino. [1]

1991:

The nationalist people's movement convinces the Philippine Senate not to extend the treaty on the U.S. military bases. The U.S. has to vacate Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Base, two of its largest overseas bases. [12]

1992:

Aquino's defence minister, Fidel Ramos, wins presidency. The US closes Subic Bay Naval Station. [1]
After the election of Ramos the Philippine government jumps on the 'globalization' bandwagon. Privatization, deregulation and liberalization become the key words in government economic policy. Successive governments are quick to sign any multilateral or bilateral treaties endorsed or demanded by the U.S., often hiding the true content of these documents from the public. The Philippines' decision to join the World Trade Organization (WTO), for example, proves to be disastrous for local agriculture -- turning a country that used to export food into a net food importer, and causing the loss of a million agriculture-related jobs. [12]

1996:

Peace agreement reached with Muslim separatist group, the Moro National Liberation Front. Another group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), carries on its campaign. [1]

1998:

Joseph Estrada elected president. [1]

2000:

November - Impeachment proceedings start against Estrada on allegations of corruption, betrayal of public trust, and violation of the constitution. [1]

2001:

January - Impeachment trial is suspended on the 16th. There are mass street protests. The military withdraws its support. Estrada stands down on the 20th, proclaiming his innocence. His vice-president, Gloria Arroyo, is sworn in as president. [1]

March - The MILF declares a ceasefire and says it is ready to hold talks with the government. [1]

April - Philippines prosecutors charge Estrada with plundering more than 80 million dollars from state funds while he was in office. Estrada is arrested and placed in custody. [1]

2002:

January - US says joint exercises with Filipino military signal new phase in war on international terrorism. Exercises take place near stronghold of Abu Sayyaf group which US says has links to Osama Bin Laden. [1]

Even president Arroyo says there is no link between Abu Sayyaf and Osama Bin Laden. But it is used as an excuse for vastly increased military cooperation with the US. Thus the US is able to reestablish a huge military presence in the region denied it by the base closures in 1991-2. [12] [13]

October - Series of deadly bomb blasts - on a Manila bus and at three locations in Zamboanga city - blamed on Islamic militants. [1]

2003:

February - Ceasefire between MILF and government breaks down. Planned talks are called off in May after a rebel attack on Mindanao kills 30. [1]

It is alleged that the CIA may be linked to the Davao bombing. [14]

July - Government signs ceasefire with MILF ahead of planned talks in Malaysia. [1]
Army mutiny in Manila; some 300 soldiers seize control of a shopping centre but surrender peacefully following negotiations. President Arroyo declares a state of rebellion. [1]

2004:

February - Peace talks between government and communist rebel New People's Army start in Norway. [1]

June - With counting completed, Gloria Arroyo wins May's presidential elections. [1]

July - Philippines withdraws its peacekeeping troops from Iraq, bowing to the demands of the kidnappers of a Filipino lorry driver. The driver is subsequently freed. [1]

November-December - Hundreds of people are killed in floods and mudslides as powerful storms and a typhoon hit the country. [1]

Summary

1890s: Insurrection against Spanish.

1898: US military rule.

1899: US slaughters Filipinos.

1902: US civil government.

1941: Japan invades.

1944: US forces retake the islands.

1945-53: US puppet presidents.

1946: Fake independence.

1947: US military bases.

1951: Peace with Japan.

1965-1986: US supports Marcos.

1972: Martial law.

1973: Absolute power for Marcos.

1980: Marcos funds Reagan.

1983: Opposition leader killed.

1986: Marcos ousted. US dictates.

1989: US helps suppress coup.

1991: US military forced to leave.

1992: Exploitative trade.

2002: US military returns.

Malaya/Malaysia

1942-45:

Japanese occupation. [1]

1946-1947:

Unrest under colonial rule grows. Trade unions and the Malayan Communist Party organise strikes.

Employers attempt to re-impose discipline through harsh measures including flogging, banishment and execution. [3]

1948:

British-ruled Malayan territories unified under Federation of Malaya. [1]

June - the murders of three rubber plantation managers triggers the State of Emergency. [3]

1948-60:

Britain declares 'emergency' in Malaya and begins 12-year war to defeat rebels, who are mainly marginalised Chinese. Britain secretly describes war as 'in defence of [the] rubber industry' and engages in widespread bombing, draconian police measures and 'resettlement' of hundreds of thousands of people in fortified 'new villages'. [2]

Under emergency regulations a range of dictatorial powers are decreed: 'seditious' publications are proscribed; coercive powers of detention, arrest, trial, deportation and 'banishment' are introduced; the death penalty is prescribed for carrying unauthorised firearms; and the registration of the entire adult population is commenced. [3]

By October 1950, the UK has committed twenty-one infantry regiments, two armoured car regiments and one commando brigade, totalling nearly 50,000 troops. An official estimate put the overall cost at a staggering £700 million, of which the UK government spent £520 million. [3]

As Creech Jones told Cabinet (but not parliament):

"During 1947 the total value of the exports of Singapore and the [Malayan] Federation together was £151 million of which dollar exports accounted for £56 million. [Malaya] is by far *the most important source of dollars in the colonial empire* and it would gravely worsen the whole dollar balance of the Sterling Area if there were serious interference with Malayan exports." [3]

In 1948 the US imported 727,000 tons of rubber, of which Malaya supplied 371,000. The US imported 158,000 tons of tin of which all but 3000 came from Malaya. In terms of dollars, rubber production exceeded in total value all domestic exports from Great Britain to the United States. During 1946-1950, it derived US\$700 million income from rubber exports to America. Any interruption of that supply, such as that presented by the insurgency, would seriously impair the British economy. [3]

1955:

Chin Peng (the leader of the MCP) offers, in vain, to negotiate a settlement. [3]

1957:

Federation of Malaya becomes independent from Britain with Tunku Abdul Rahman as prime minister. [1]

1958:

MCP demobilised. [3]

1960:

Chin Peng, still with a large price on his head, and a small nucleus regroups near the Malay-Thai border where they hide, train new cadres and carry out hit-and-run guerrilla attacks along the northern Malay peninsula for the next twenty five years. A final peace agreement was eventually signed on 2 December 1989. [3]

1963:

British colonies of Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore join Federation of Malaya to form the Federation of Malaysia. [1]

1965:

Singapore withdraws from Malaysia, which is reduced to 13 states; communist insurgency begins in Sarawak. [1]

1969:

Malays stage anti-Chinese riots in the context of increasing frustration over the economic success of the ethnic Chinese. [1]

1970:

Tun Abdul Razak becomes prime minister following Abdul Rahman's resignation; forms National Front (BN) coalition. [1]

1971:

Government introduces minimum quotas for Malays in business, education and the civil service. [1]

1977:

Kelantan chief minister expelled from Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), triggering unrest, a national emergency and the expulsion of PAS from the BN coalition. [1]

1978-89:

Vietnamese refugees benefit from unrestricted asylum. [1]

1981:

Mahathir Mohamad becomes prime minister. [1]

1989:

Local communist insurgents sign peace accord with government. [1]

1990:

Sarawak communist insurgents sign peace accord with government. [1]

1993:

Sultans lose legal immunity. [1]

1997:

Asian financial crisis spells end of decade of impressive economic growth. [1]

1998:

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad sacks his deputy and presumed successor, Anwar Ibrahim, on charges of sexual misconduct, against the background of differences between the two men over economic policy; Ibrahim arrested. [1]

2000:

Ibrahim is found guilty of sodomy and sentenced to nine years in prison. This is added to the six-year jail sentence he was given in 1999 after being found guilty of corruption following a controversial trial. [1]

2001:

February - Government decides to proceed with construction of huge Bakun hydroelectric power project on island of Borneo despite serious environmental concerns. [1]

March - Dozens arrested during Malaysia's worst ethnic clashes in decades between Malays and ethnic Indians. [1]

April - Demonstrations against the Internal Security Act following the detention without trial of supporters of Anwar Ibrahim. [1]

September - Malaysia, Singapore resolve long-standing disputes, ranging from water supplies to air space. They also agree to build a new bridge and tunnel. [1]

2002:

February - Police round up thousands of Indonesians and Filipinos in a campaign to curb illegal immigration. [1]

June - Veteran Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad announces that he will resign in 2003. The news sends shockwaves across the country. [1]

August - Tough new laws against illegal immigrants come into effect, providing for whipping and prison terms for offenders. Laws prompt exodus of foreign workers. [1]

2003:

October - Abdullah Ahmad Badawi takes over as prime minister as Mahathir Mohamad steps down after 22 years in office. [1]

2004:

March - Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi wins landslide general election victory. [1]

September - Former deputy PM Anwar Ibrahim freed after court overturns his sodomy conviction. [1]

Summary

1942-45: Japanese occupation.

1946-1947: Unrest under British colonial rule.

1948: Federation of Malaya formed. State of Emergency.

1948-60: Brutal British war against rebels to keep hold of rubber industry.

1957: Federation of Malaya becomes independent from Britain.

1963: Federation of Malaysia formed.

1965: Singapore withdraws from Malaysia. Insurgency in Sarawak.

1977: Unrest.

1989-1990: Peace with insurgents.

2001: Ethnic clashes.

Indonesia

1944:

As the second world war becomes more desperate, Japan announces in September 1944 that not only Java but the entire archipelago will become independent. [1]

1945:

June - Sukarno gives a speech outlining the Pancasila; the five guiding principles of the Indonesian nation. The five principles are belief in God, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy, and social justice. [1]

August - Japan surrenders. The Indonesian leadership, pressured by radical youth groups (the *pemuda*), are obliged to move quickly. With the cooperation of individual Japanese navy and army officers, Sukarno and Hatta formally declare the nation's independence on August 17 at the former's residence in Jakarta. The following day a new constitution is promulgated. [1]

September - Van Mook, Dutch Lieutenant-Governor of the Indies, meets British Lord Mountbatten in Ceylon, and asks that Japanese troops still in Indonesia be ordered by the British to suppress the Republican government. Mountbatten agrees, but the Japanese delay. [2]

British Rear Admiral Patterson lands in Jakarta. He announces that the British mission is "to maintain law and order until the time that the lawful government of the Netherlands East Indies is once again

functioning". The Dutch ask Patterson to have the leaders of the Republic arrested, but the British high command tells Patterson not to interfere in politics. [2]

Most Indonesians, believe that the Allied goal was the restoration of Dutch rule. Thus, in the weeks between the August 17 declaration of independence and the first Allied landings, republican leaders hastily consolidate their political power. [1]

October - Major violence erupts in Surabaya in East Java, as occupying British troops clash with *pemuda* and other armed groups. [1]

British Major General Hawthorn flies to Surabaya from Jakarta. Sukarno, Hatta, Mallaby, and Hawthorn sign a cease-fire. Five hours later Mallaby is killed. British bombard Surabaya as punishment, thousands are left dead or homeless. British strafe civilian refugees on highway. [2]

PKI is organized again. [2]

November - Through the efforts of Syahrir, the new republic is given a parliamentary form of government. Syahrir, who had refused to cooperate with the wartime Japanese regime and had campaigned hard against retaining occupation-era institutions, such as Peta, is appointed the first prime minister and heads three short-lived cabinets until ousted by his deputy, Amir Syarifuddin, in June 1947. [1]

1946:

The Dutch, realizing their weak position during the year following the Japanese surrender, are initially disposed to negotiate with the republic for some form of commonwealth relationship between the archipelago and the Netherlands. The negotiations result in the British-brokered Linggajati Agreement, initialled on November 12. The agreement provides for Dutch recognition of republican rule on Java and Sumatra, and the Netherlands-Indonesian Union under the Dutch crown (consisting of the Netherlands, the republic, and the eastern archipelago). The archipelago is to have a loose federal arrangement, the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RUSI), comprising the republic (on Java and Sumatra), southern Kalimantan, and the "Great East" consisting of Sulawesi, Maluku, the Lesser Sunda Islands, and West New Guinea. [1]

1947:

The KNIP do not ratify the agreement until March 1947, and neither the republic nor the Dutch are happy with it. The agreement is signed on May 25, 1947. [1]

July 21 - The Dutch, claiming violations of the Linggajati Agreement, launch what is euphemistically called a "police action" against the republic. Dutch troops drive the republicans out of Sumatra and East and West Java, confining them to the Yogyakarta region of Central Java. The international reaction to the police action, however, is negative. The United Nations (UN) Security Council established a Good Offices Committee to sponsor further negotiations. This action leads to the Renville Agreement (named for the United States Navy ship on which the negotiations were held), which is ratified by both sides on January 17, 1948. It recognizes temporary Dutch control of areas taken by the police action but provides for referendums in occupied areas on their political future. [1]

1948:

In western Java, an Islamic mystic named Kartosuwirjo, with the support of *kyai* and others, establishes a breakaway regime called the Indonesian Islamic State (Negara Islam Indonesia), better known as Darul Islam (from the Arabic, *dar-al-Islam*, house or country of Islam), a political movement committed to the establishment of a Muslim theocracy. Kartosuwirjo and his followers stir the cauldron of local unrest in West Java until he is captured and executed in 1962. [1]

September - Local clashes between republican armed forces and the PKI break out in Surakarta. [1]

December - The Dutch launch a second "police action" that captures Yogyakarta. Sukarno, Hatta, who is there serving both as vice president and prime minister, and other republican leaders are arrested and exiled to northern Sumatra or the island of Bangka. An emergency republican government is established in western Sumatra. But The Hague's hard-fisted policies arouse a strong international

reaction not only among newly independent Asian countries, such as India, but also among members of the UN Security Council, including the United States. [1]

1949:

January - the Security Council passes a resolution demanding the reinstatement of the republican government. The Dutch are also pressured to accept a full transfer of authority in the archipelago to Indonesians by July 1, 1950. [1]

February - Tan Malaka, the leader of Trotskyite forces, is captured and executed by republic troops. [1]

August-November - The Round Table Conference is held in The Hague, to determine the means by which the transfer could be accomplished. The result of the conference is an agreement that the Netherlands would recognize the RUSI as an independent state, that all Dutch military forces would be withdrawn, and that elections would be held for a Constituent Assembly. Two particularly difficult questions slow down the negotiations: the status of West New Guinea, which remained under Dutch control, and the size of debts owed by Indonesia to the Netherlands, an amount of 4.3 billion guilders being agreed upon. Sovereignty is formally transferred on December 27. [1]

1950:

January - an abortive coup d'état in West Java is led by Raymond Paul Pierre "The Turk" Westerling, a Dutch commando and counterinsurgency expert who, as a commander in the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL), had used terroristic, guerrilla-style pacification methods against local populations during the National Revolution. [1]

April - the Republic of South Maluku (RMS) is proclaimed at Ambon. With its large Christian population and long history of collaboration with Dutch rule (Ambonese soldiers had formed an indispensable part of the colonial military), the region is one of the few with substantial pro-Dutch sentiment. The Republic of South Maluku is suppressed by November 1950, and the following year some 12,000 Ambonese soldiers accompanied by their families go to the Netherlands, where they establish a Republic of South Maluku government-in-exile. [1]

By May, all the federal states have been absorbed into a unitary Republic of Indonesia, and Jakarta is designated the capital. [1]

September - Indonesia is admitted to the United Nations. [4]

1952:

In the early 1950s, the highest-ranking military officers, the so-called "technocratic" faction, plan to demobilize many of the military's 200,000 men in order to promote better discipline and modernization. Most affected are less-educated veteran officers of Peta and other military units organized during the Japanese and revolutionary periods. The veterans seek, and gain, the support of parliamentary politicians. This support prompts senior military officers to organize demonstrations in Jakarta and to pressure Sukarno to dissolve parliament on October 17, 1952. Sukarno refuses. Instead, he begins encouraging war veterans to oppose their military superiors; and the army chief of staff, Sumatran Colonel Abdul Haris Nasution (born 1918), is obliged to resign in a Sukarno-induced shake-up of military commands. [3]

1953:

East Timor is made a province of Portugal. Borneo is renamed Kalimantan Province. [4]

1954:

Talks begin on dissolving the Netherlands-Indonesia constitutional union. [4]

Indonesia unsuccessfully tries to have the UN pass a resolution against Dutch possession of Irian Jaya. [4]

1955:

Independent Indonesia's first general election takes place on September 29. It involves a universal adult franchise, and almost 38 million people participate. Sukarno's PNI wins a slim plurality with the largest number of votes, 22.3 percent, and fifty-seven seats in the House of Representatives. Masyumi,

which operated as a political party during the parliamentary era, wins 20.9 percent of the vote and fifty-seven seats; the Nahdatul Ulama, which had split off from Masyumi in 1952, wins 18.4 percent of the vote and forty-five seats. The PKI make an impressive showing, obtaining 16.4 percent of the vote and thirty-nine seats, a result that apparently reflects its appeal among the poorest people; the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) wins 2 percent of the vote and five seats. The following December, the long-awaited Constituent Assembly is elected to draft a constitution to replace the provisional constitution of 1950. The membership is largely the same as the DPR. [3]
In the eastern archipelago and Sumatra, military officers established their own satrapies, often reaping large profits from smuggling. Nasution, reappointed and working in cooperation with Sukarno, issues an order transferring these officers out of their localities. [3]

1956:

The assembly convenes in November, but becomes deadlocked over issues such as the Pancasila as the state ideology. [3]

The result of the orders to transfer corrupt military officers out of their localities, is an attempted coup d'état launched during October-November. The coup fails and the instigators go underground, and military officers in some parts of Sumatra seize control of civilian governments in defiance of Jakarta. [3]

1957:

Sukarno formally proposes "guided democracy" in a speech. "Guided Democracy" was Sukarno's idea to unify the Cabinet by including members of all political parties, and to create a new National Council to counterbalance the unstable Assembly. From the beginning, Sukarno had been unhappy with the the chaos of party politics. Critics of Sukarno and his new concept saw it as a step towards a more Communist-friendly government. Guided Democracy in practice did not lead to more power for Communists, rather it led to more power for Sukarno himself. [2]

July - PKI makes gains in local elections; becomes the leading party in Central Java. [2]

December - Sukarno announces that the holdings of 246 Dutch businesses will be nationalized. [2]

1958:

February - Rebels set up rival PRRI government (Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia) at Bukittinggi. Prawiranegara is PRRI President. Natsir and Harahap of Masyumi support the PRRI, as does Djojohadikusumo of the PSI party. Permesta rebels in Sulawesi join forces with PRRI. The USA promises secret aid to the rebels. Sukarno demands a hard response. [2]

1959:

July - The assembly is dissolved. [3]

August - Sukarno calls his new system of government-by-decree "Manifesto Politik" or Manipol. The ideology is not well-defined, but newspapers that do not support it are closed down. [2]

Uprising in East Timor gains Indonesian backing, but is suppressed by Portugal. [2]

October - Nasution dismisses Suharto as commander of the Diponegoro division, after Suharto is found to be using his military office to demand money from Central Java businesses. Suharto is reassigned to the military staff college in Bandung. [2]

1960:

January - Soviets begin a large-scale program of military aid to Indonesia, including advanced bombers and submarines. [2]

July - PKI criticizes the cabinet. Army detains the entire PKI Politburo for questioning; Sukarno has them released. [2]

1961:

January - Soviet Union gives Indonesia US\$400 million in arms credits following Nasution's visit. Nasution visits Washington. The U.S. declines to give military aid. [2]

April - Sukarno visits United States and meets with President Kennedy. Sukarno tells Kennedy that if the United States supports him, he will oppose communism. [2]

Work begins on a proposed nuclear research facility at Bandung, with U.S. Support. [2]

September - Netherlands foreign minister Luns tells the U.N. General Assembly that the Netherlands would be willing to yield West Irian to U.N. Administration. [2]

October - Subandrio addresses the U.N. General Assembly, suggesting that Indonesia would be willing to use force to take West Irian if peaceful means are exhausted. [2]

1962:

January - Two Dutch warships engage four Indonesian torpedo boats off West Irian. One Indonesian boat is sunk; another damaged. [2]

February - U.S. Atty. Gen. Robert F Kennedy arrives in Jakarta to lead negotiations on West Irian. Robert Kennedy continues to the Netherlands; informs the Netherlands government that the U.S. will not support the Dutch should the conflict escalate. [2]

April - Indonesian military pressure on West Irian increases, including air and sea attacks. [2]

August - Dutch agree to transfer West Irian to United Nations in October. UN is to transfer West Irian to Indonesia by May 1963. Elections are to decide the ultimate fate of the territory. [2]

September - Subandrio visits Singapore; states that he cannot guarantee that Indonesia will not make claims on Malaysian territory. [2]

December - First meeting of Brunei's Legislative Council after the elections is scheduled to meet: Azahari states that he will enter resolutions against Malaysia, for incorporating Sarawak and Sabah into Brunei, and for a complete break with Britain. The Sultan of Brunei postpones the meeting until December 19. Azahari leaves for Manila. [2]

Rebellion breaks out in Brunei and nearby areas of Sarawak and Sabah, with covert support from Indonesia. The rebels do not take over the radio station, and the police force remains loyal to the Sultan. British emergency troops from Singapore land in the evening. [2]

Sultan of Brunei asks rebels to put down their weapons; rebellion breaks up. About 80 are killed in all, mostly rebels. Legislative Council is replaced by an Emergency Council. Brunei does not join Malaysia. [2]

Philippine diplomats arrive in London for talks on the future of North Borneo/Sabah (to which the Philippines also had a claim) and the plans for Malaysia. The talks fail, and the Philippines declares its opposition to the Malaysia plan. [2]

1963:

February - Sukarno publicly states Indonesia's opposition to the creation of Malaysia. [2]

May - Indonesia, Malaya, and the Philippines begins talks on future of disputed territories including Sabah, and a possible "Maphilindo" confederation. PKI strongly opposes the "Malaysia" concept, but is also opposed to "Maphilindo". Talks continue through August. [2]

July - Malaya and Britain sign final agreements in London to have the nation of Malaysia founded on August 31. Sukarno is furious. [2]

August - U.N. mission arrives in Sarawak and Sabah to survey the wishes of the citizens regarding their future. [2]

September - Results of the U.N. survey are released: according to the survey, a majority of citizens of Sarawak and Sabah preferred to join Malaysia. [2]

Malaysia is founded. Mob attacks the British and Malayan embassies in Jakarta. Indonesia breaks off relations with Kuala Lumpur. Philippines downgrades its embassy in Kuala Lumpur to a consulate. [2]

Malaysia recalls its ambassadors from both Indonesia and the Philippines. Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur is attacked; Sukarno is burned in effigy. A PKI-sponsored demonstration burns down the British embassy in Jakarta and 48 British residences. [2]

British properties in Indonesia valued at US\$400 million are nationalized. [2]

U.S. President Kennedy cuts off remaining military aid to Indonesia. [2]

December - U.S. President Johnson withdraws economic aid. Covert military aid to pro-U.S. figures in ABRI continues. [2]

1964:

January - A ceasefire between Malaysia and Indonesia, arranged after several diplomatic trips by Robert F. Kennedy of the United States, goes into effect. [2]

PKI confiscates British-owned properties. [2]

June - Indonesia agrees to withdraw forces from border areas with Malaysia in exchange for continued negotiations. [2]

Major clash between Indonesia-based guerillas and Malaysian forces in Sarawak. [2]

British forces defeat a group of Indonesian-based guerillas in Sarawak. [2]

September - Indonesian raids into Malaya are brought before the United Nations Security Council. [2]

U.N. Security Council votes 9-2 to condemn the Indonesian raids, but the Soviet Union vetoes the resolution. [2]

1965:

January - Indonesia walks out of the United Nations (effective March 1), in protest of Malaysia's admission. [2]

British Gurkha troops execute secret counterstrike into Indonesian territory on Kalimantan. [2]

July - Sukarno declares that if British raids occur against Indonesian territory, "Singapore will be destroyed". [2]

August - Violence between PNI and NU supporters on one side and PKI supporters on the other heats up in Central and East Java. [2]

Sukarno cuts off ties with IMF, World Bank, Interpol. [2]

Sukarno gives a speech in Merdeka Square promoting an anti-imperialist alliance with Beijing and other Asian Communist regimes, and warning the Army not to interfere. He also states that he will take the PKI's idea of "arming the people" under consideration, and make the final decision on the matter. [2]

September - Army takes control of the distribution of rice in Jakarta. [2]

Sukarno gives a speech stating that Indonesia was entering the "second phase of the revolution", which would be the "implementation of socialism". [2]

September 30th - In the evening, Lt.-Col. Untung, head of the Cakrabirawa Regiment (Presidential Guards), other Diponegoro and Brawijaya Division soldiers, and PKI supporters gather at Halim Air Base, with Gen. Omar Dhani and Aidit present. The forces are under the tactical command of Brigadier-General Supardjo, who had recently been commanding guerilla forces in the Konfrontasi against Malaysia. They leave and attempt to take seven top army generals. Nasution escapes by leaping over the wall of his house, his young daughter is shot and Lt. Tendean, his aide, is taken away. Gen. Ahmad Yani is killed at his house, as are two others. Three other generals are taken alive with Lt. Tendean and the bodies of the dead to Halim, where the remaining live captives are murdered and thrown in the well called Lubang Buaya. [2]

Rebel soldiers take Merdeka Square in Jakarta by the Presidential Palace, the radio and TV stations. [2]

October 1st - Suharto arrives at Kostrad Headquarters overlooking Merdeka Square, takes emergency control of loyal troops after consulting with available generals. [2]

At 7:00 A.M., the radio announces that "Movement 30 September" (Gerakan 30 September, or G30S) is pro-Sukarno, anti-corruption, anti-United States and anti-CIA. [2]

Gen. Omar Dhani issues a statement supporting the rebels. [2]

Mutinies in five of seven Diponegoro Division battalions support the rebels, as do Naval officers in Surabaya. [2]

Sukarno goes to Halim, consults with Omar Dhani but not with Aidit. [2]

Suharto offers water to hot soldiers in Merdeka Square, they come to his side. He ignores messages from Sukarno. [2]

Suharto announces on radio that six generals are dead, he is in control of the army, and he will suppress the coup attempt and protect Sukarno. [2]

Senior leaders of Nahdlatul Ulama go into hiding. Ansor, the Islamic youth organization associated with Nahdlatul Ulama, releases a statement that it and NU have nothing to do with the coup attempt (despite claims by the rebels that four NU leaders are part of G30S). [2]

October 2nd - Military rebels in Central Java retreat to countryside. [2]

Suharto agrees to Sukarno order taking presidential control of army, but only if Suharto has emergency powers to restore order. [2]

Omar Dhani retracts his earlier statement supporting the coup. [2]

October 8th - Mass demonstration in Jakarta (possibly of more than 100,000) demands the dissolution of the PKI. PKI headquarters in Jakarta are burned. [2]

October 18th - Nearly a hundred Communists killed in battle with Ansor youths. Beginning of general massacre of PKI supporters in Central and East Java. [2]

Bloodbath in Indonesia begins as army moves against supporters of Indonesian Communist Party, reaching around a million deaths. Declassified documents show Britain aids the Indonesian army in conducting the slaughter through covert operations and secret messages of support. [4] [6]

November - Fighting between PNI and PKI supporters on Bali begins massacre of Communists on Bali. [2]

December - 10,000 PKI supporters have been arrested, many thousand more killed. Anti-Communist massacres are heavy on Bali. The ABRI commander for Aceh announces that Aceh is now free of Communists. [2]

By the end of 1965, a huge wave of popular violence against the PKI had started. In West and Central Java, the army began rounding up Communists, but in many villages, people took the law into their own hands. In some areas, such as East Java or Aceh, Islamic groups (such as the Nahdlatul Ulama youth group Ansor) fought to wipe out communists. However, there was a heavy anti-communist purge on Bali as well. Thousands were sent to prison, and over a year's time, perhaps more than 250,000 were dead. ABRI did not commit all of the killings, but ABRI officers did arm and train the student groups that committed killings, and also did not act to stop the violence until the PKI had been wiped out. [2]

CIA and State department officials admit compiling lists of names of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), making those lists available to the Indonesian military, and checking names off as people were "eliminated." The killings were part of a massive bloodletting after an abortive coup attempt taking, according to various estimates, between 250,000 and 1,000,000 lives and ultimately led to the overthrow of President Sukarno's government. [5] [13]

1966:

Roundups continue of PKI supporters, degenerate into random, unplanned violence in many areas. [2]

Sukarno is forced to concede broad powers to Suharto. Suharto then bans the PKI. [2]

Indonesia begins rescheduling debt payments. IMF is brought back in. [2]

Plot to take Sukarno and restore him to power fails; Sukarno would not cooperate. [2]

1967:

British and USA properties are returned to owners. [2] [4]

Indonesia breaks diplomatic relations with China. [2]

Anti-Christian riots in Makassar; Suharto speaks out against religious violence. [2]

1968:

Foreign Minister Adam Malik says that Indonesia will make an independent foreign policy, but one friendly with the USA. [2]

Army-run oil companies, including Pertamina, are merged into Pertamina, headed by Ibnu Sutowo. Pertamina now has a monopoly on the oil industry in Indonesia, but work is contracted out to foreign firms as well. [2]

First World Bank loans to Indonesia. [2]

1969:

U.S. President Nixon visits Jakarta. [2]

Village councils in Irian Jaya, under pressure from Opsus special forces in the region, vote in favor of joining Indonesia. The number of votes cast was 1022. [2]

1970:

Suharto visits Washington. [2]

Student protests are banned after series of demonstrations against corruption. [2]

Sukarno dies at Bogor. [2]

Results of anti-corruption commission's investigation-- that corruption is widespread throughout government--are leaked to the press.[2]

Suharto announces that only two corruption cases will be brought to court. Anti-corruption commission is closed. [2]

1972:

Dry weather and government inaction lead to rice shortages on Java. International prices for rice increase as the Indonesian government is forced to start importing. Beginning of "rice crisis". [2]

1973:

Student protests against foreign influences, poor economic conditions, and corruption in government spread. Gen. Sumitro speaks to student groups. [2]

1974:

Widespread arrests follow the "Malari" riots. Most public meetings are banned, many newspapers and magazines are shut down. [2]

1975:

Pertamina, the state oil company, defaults on a \$40 million short-term loan from a consortium of U.S. Banks and a \$60 million Canadian loan. [2]

Report to the Assembly states that Pertamina's total debt is more than \$10 billion, much of it in enterprises that have nothing to do with oil. [2]

August-September - UDT takes control in Timor by coup; Portuguese simply leave. Fretilin declares rebellion, drives UDT out of Dili into Indonesian territory, begins killing enemies. [2]

The Australian ambassador to Indonesia, Richard Woolcott, sends a cable to Canberra urging acquiescence with Indonesia's plans to annex East Timor. "It would seem to me that this department [of Minerals and Energy] might well have an interest in closing the present gap in the agreed sea border and this could be much more readily negotiated with Indonesia than with Portugal; or independent Portuguese Timor," he wrote. "I know I am recommending a pragmatic rather than a principled stand but that is what national interest and foreign policy is all about," [7]

October - Indonesian commando units start limited operations in East Timor. [2]

November - Fretilin declares independence, demands withdrawal of Indonesian units. [2]

December - The day before Indonesia's invasion of East Timor, Kissinger meets with Suharto and approves of the invasion (this fact was denied by the US government until documents confirming it were declassified in 2001). [8]

Philip Liechty, Senior CIA officer in Indonesia in 1975, told John Pilger: "What I saw was that my own government was very much involved in what was going on in East Timor... you can be 100 per cent certain that Suharto was explicitly given the green light to do what he did." [9]

In secret cable, British ambassador in Jakarta says Indonesia 'should absorb the territory as soon and as unobtrusively as possible' and that Britain 'should avoid taking sides against the Indonesian government'. [4]

Indonesia launches a full invasion of East Timor at Dili and Baucau, installs a new government at Dili with UDT and Apodeti members.[2]

United Nations General Assembly calls on Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor. [2]

1976:

Indonesia receives over \$2 billion in financing and credits from governments in America, Europe and Japan to meet the Pertamina crisis. [2]

United Nations Security Council condemns Indonesia's presence in East Timor. [2]

"People's Assembly" in East Timor declares for integration with Indonesia. East Timor officially becomes a province. [2]

1977:

ABRI begins heavy operations against Fretilin on East Timor--operations continue for 18 months. [2]

1978:

David Owen, then Foreign Secretary of Wilson's Labour government, agrees to sell the Hawk to Indonesia. From that point onwards, the British establishment played court to President Suharto by selling him more Hawks, missiles, helicopters, frigates, armoured vehicles, military communications and a fully equipped institution of technology for the Indonesian army. The pact was shamefully sealed by the superficial grandeur of royal handshakes during a visit by the Queen and Prince Charles soon after. [9]

1979:

Government allows some foreign aid workers to enter East Timor. [2]

1980:

A group of 26 politicians and military figures issues a petition for fair elections. [2]

1982:

Nearly one million turn out for PPP rally in Jakarta. Competing Golkar rally is attacked by PPP supporters, who are then fired on by security forces. Seven are killed. Tempo Magazine is closed for two months for reporting on the incident. [2]

1983:

March - Cease-fire agreement signed between Indonesian government and representatives of Fretilin (East Timor guerillas). [2]

August - ABRI resumes attacks on Fretilin in East Timor. [2]

1984:

Assembly passes law requiring all political parties to adopt Pancasila as doctrine. [2]

1985:

Hundreds of alleged PKI supporters are removed from government jobs. Many PKI prisoners from the 1965 events are executed. [2]

1986:

U.S. President Reagan visits Indonesia; two reporters in the entourage are denied entry. [2]

1989:

March - Clandestine operations against rebels in Irian Jaya begin; continue through August. [2]

1990:

Indonesian forces pursue Irian Jaya rebels into Papua New Guinea territory. [2]

November - 70 Indonesian soldiers are killed in a battle with Fretilin guerillas near Ainaro, East Timor. Army lands several thousand reinforcements later in the month. [2]

December - Japan pledges a US\$1.2 billion aid package for Indonesia. [2]

1991:

Prime Minister John Major urges his European partners to cut aid to countries with bad human rights records. At the same time though, he agreed to the further sale of a billion dollars worth of Hawk

aircraft to the Indonesian government, shaking hands with Indonesian Weapons Chief BJ Habibie at Downing Street. [9]

Santa Cruz cemetery massacre in which troops fire on mourners at a funeral in Dili of Fretilin supporter, killing more than 100 people.[10]

November - The British govt increased aid to Indonesia to 81 million - a rise of 250 per cent. Former Conservative MP Alan Clark, who played a major role in the deals, revealed that he sought no guarantees from the Indonesians as to how British weapons would be deployed. Asked whether he would have accepted a guarantee from the Indonesians that Hawks would not be used in East Timor, he retorted "A guarantee is worthless from any government as far as I'm concerned." He also scoffed at the claim that all the Hawks sold to Indonesia were merely 'training aircraft'. The fact of the matter is that all Hawks are 'trainers'. "That's just a label you put on it," he said. "The Hawk has a dual use with a capital D". [9]

1992:

November - Xanana Gusmao is captured in East Timor and sentenced to life in prison. Fretilin rebellion weakens. [2]

1993:

Leader of OPM (Irian Jaya rebels, Organisasi Papua Merdeka) Marthen Luther Prawar is killed in a clash with Indonesian forces. [2]

1995:

20th anniversary of the Indonesian invasion marked by protest by 112 East Timorese and sympathisers who enter Russian and Dutch embassies in Jakarta. [10]

1996:

April - British-supplied Scorpion light tanks used in Indonesia to repress demonstrators. It is the first of eight known occasions in 1996–2000 that British armoured cars are used for internal repression. Blair government continues arms to Indonesia. [4]

November - Acting Bishop of Dili, Carlos Belo, and resistance leader Jose Ramos Horta jointly awarded Nobel Peace Prize, raising international awareness of the East Timorese independence struggle. [10]

"Please, I beg you, do not sustain longer a conflict which without British arms sales to Indonesia could never have been sustained for so long."

[Bishop Belo to Tony Blair] [9]

1997:

IMF approves loan package for Indonesia which requires Indonesia to reform its economy, end many state subsidies and reduce cronyism. Many Suharto family enterprises are affected by the requirements of the loan package, including Tommy Suharto's monopoly on the clove trade, which is required to be cancelled. [2]

1998:

January - Suharto announces yearly budget with heavy subsidies for pet projects contrary to the conditions for receiving IMF aid. IMF director Camdessus goes to Jakarta to get Suharto to sign a fresh letter of intent to fulfill the IMF obligations. [2]

Riots begin to break out in East Java over rising food prices. [2]

There is no mention of any arms sales to Indonesia in the 1998 UK Foreign Office Annual Report. An Amnesty International study, however, uncovers that Labour have made 64 separate arms contracts with Indonesia since accession to power. [9]

May - Suharto announces his resignation at 9:00 AM. Vice-President B. J. Habibie is the new President of Indonesia. [2]

June - Attorney General Soedjono Atmonegoro presents a report to President Habibie on widespread corruption in the "Yayasan" or "Foundations" organized by President Suharto and his family. He is fired by President Habibie five hours later. [2]

July - Pro-independence Timorese threaten violence in East Timor; thousands flee. [2]

400 ABRI troops leave East Timor. [2]

August - President Habibie apologizes on behalf of the government for human rights abuses. [2]

December - Suharto goes to Attorney General's office to face questions about corruption during his presidency. Students demonstrate nearby. [2]

1999:

January - Indonesia says it will consider independence for East Timor if people reject autonomy. [10]

February - Gen. Wiranto gives a blanket "shoot on sight" order to troops combating looting and rioting throughout Indonesia. [2]

February-April - Gusmao moved from Jakarta prison to house arrest. In response to increasing violence by anti-independence activists, Gusmao orders guerrillas to resume independence struggle. [10]

May - Indonesia, Portugal sign agreement to allow East Timorese to vote on their future. Deal endorsed by UN. [10]

September - UN officials announce that the referendum in East Timor has resulted in a 78% vote for independence, with over a 99% turnout. [2]

Violence erupts as anti-independence militia helped by the Indonesian military resume campaign of terror, leaving up to 1,000 dead. A quarter of the population flees, mainly to West Timor. Martial law imposed. Gusmao freed. [10]

Much of East Timor is destroyed and approximately 200,000 to 300,000 refugees are created. The UN evacuates, leaving the East Timorese to the mercy of the Indonesian forces. [8]

Britain continues arms sales to Jakarta and finally agrees only to delay not stop them, while inviting Indonesia to an arms fair in Britain. Blair government tries to take credit for stopping Indonesian violence by helping to establish UN peace enforcement mission. [4] [11]

Australian-led peacekeeping force arrives, gradually restores order. Many militia members flee to West Timor to avoid arrest. Indonesian parliament recognises outcome of referendum. [10]

October - Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) is elected President. [2]

Xanana Gusmao returns to East Timor on a U.S. helicopter assigned to Interfet. [2]

UN approves 9,000-man UNTAET peacekeeping force for East Timor. [2]

December - At least 70 are reported dead in recent rioting in Ambon. Government reports that over 750 people died in violence in and near Ambon during 1999. Rioting on Ternate and Tidore, Maluku, kills 7. [2]

2000:

January - Indonesian Navy begins a blockade of Ambon harbor in an attempt to stop the illegal flow of weapons. [2]

February - President Wahid visits Dili, East Timor, and apologizes for human rights violations while East Timor was a part of Indonesia. [2]

September - IMF releases US\$399 million loan to Indonesia. [2]

U.S. Defense Secretary Cohen visits Jakarta; states that U.S. military aid to Indonesia will be endangered unless the situation in West Timor is brought under control. A disarmament of militias in the West Timor border region begins; some militiamen are reported collecting their weapons again just after turning them in publicly, others refuse to cooperate. [2]

UN evacuates staff from West Timor after murder of three refugee agency workers by pro-Indonesian militia gangs. An Indonesian court jails six men for up to 20 months for the killings, earning international outrage for being too lenient. [10]

2001:

March - Indonesian government declares the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka to be a separatist movement. [2]

April - Exxon-Mobil natural gas production facility in Aceh is attacked. [2]

World Bank defers release of a US\$300 million loan to Indonesia, stating the government had not yet implemented reforms demanded by the World Bank. [2]

Indonesian Army sends 1000 special forces troops as reinforcements to Aceh from Bandung. [2]

The Assembly (DPR) approves a memorandum stating that President Wahid has one month to improve his performance, or he will face a special session to remove him. [2]

July - Assembly passes a bill giving greater autonomy to Aceh, including a greater share of oil and gas revenues for the next eight years. [2]

Wahid issues an emergency decree from the Presidential Palace, including suspension of the Assembly and all activities of the Golkar party, and calling for general elections within a year. The military and police ignore the decree, and six cabinet ministers, including Agum Gumelar and Marzuki Darusman, resign. [2]

The Assembly votes 591 to 0 to remove Wahid from office. Megawati Sukarnoputri is inaugurated as the fifth President of Indonesia. The current cabinet is immediately dismissed. [2]

Floods and landslides hit Nias; governor of Sumatera Utara province blames deforestation for the disaster. [2]

August - U.S.-owned Caltex oil operations in Riau offer a package of job offers for local residents and community development funds in order to avoid a planned blockade by protesters. Local activists had demanded a 70% stake in the operations. [2]

President Megawati offers an apology to residents of Aceh and West Papua for human rights violations in the past. [2]

Violence in Aceh during Independence Day celebrations includes widespread rioting and bombing and several deaths. Four banks are bombed; as many as 60 schools are burnt. [2]

Indonesian government signs Letter of Intent with the International Monetary Fund. The agreement releases US\$400 million of an eventual US\$5 billion loan from the IMF to Indonesia. [2]

The Norwegian freighter Tampa rescues over 400 Middle Eastern migrants from the sinking Indonesian ship KM Palapa 1. The migrants were leaving Indonesia and attempting to enter Australia. Australia refuses entry to the migrants, who eventually end up in Nauru. [2]

September - President Megawati arrives in Washington on a state visit. Megawati condemns the September 11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. The U.S. and Indonesia agree to restore some military ties which had previously been cancelled over the issue of East Timor. The U.S. also pledges another US\$150 million in aid to Indonesia to support legal reforms, reconstruction and refugee assistance in Maluku and Aceh, and police training. [2]

Small demonstration outside the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta includes calls to kill the U.S. Ambassador. [2]

October - Garment factories in Semarang lay off 1200 workers. Footwear and electronic factories also report slowdowns. [2]

Indonesian government expresses concern over the U.S. actions in Afghanistan, and asks the U.N. to pay attention to humanitarian issues there. Partai Keadilan members demonstrate at the U.S. Embassy. Islamic fundamentalists in Lashkar Jihad and other radical groups threaten to attack U.S. citizens on Indonesian soil. [2]

November - Theys Eluay, leader of the independence movement for Papua (Irian Jaya), is found dead in a town east of Jayapura. The body was found in a crashed vehicle with police license plates, and showed signs of beating. Scattered rioting breaks out around Jayapura. [2]

Army announces that it will send 30,000 reinforcements to units fighting separatists and intercommunal violence in Aceh, Maluku, Papua, and Kalimantan. [2]

2002:

January - Indonesia inaugurates human rights court to hold military accountable for atrocities in East Timor after 1999 independence vote. [10]

February - Assembly committee votes to deny an official reception for Australian Prime Minister Howard, in protest of Australia's interference in internal Indonesian affairs. [2]

June - National Development Planning Minister Kwik Kian Gie says that Indonesia should stop accepting IMF loans if the conditions for their acceptance are too harsh. [2]

Indonesia agrees to economic reforms in exchange for a resumption of IMF loans. [2]

August - U.S. Sec. of State Colin Powell, in Jakarta, announces that the U.S. will give US\$50 million to Indonesia for anti-terrorism efforts. [2]

Former Gov. Soares of the Indonesian province of East Timor is convicted of crimes against humanity, but only sentenced to three years in jail. [2]

Six military officers are acquitted of war crimes in a government human rights tribunal in Jakarta. [2]

October - Bomb blasts in Denpasar, Bali, kill 202, including 88 Australians. [2]

President Megawati signs two new anti-terrorism decrees, giving police the ability to detain terrorism suspects for six months without trial, and authorizing the death penalty for terrorist acts. Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah express their support for the new anti-terrorism decrees. [2]

November - Eurico Guterres, leader of the pro-Indonesian Aitarak militia in East Timor, is sentenced to 10 years in prison by an Indonesian court for human rights violations and crimes against humanity. [2]

December - Australian P.M. Howard tells reporters that the U.N. Charter should be changed to allow countries to make pre-emptive strikes against terrorists in other countries. Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines protest. [2]

The International Court of Justice awards the disputed islands of Sipadan and Ligitan off Kalimantan Timur to Malaysia. Indonesia says it will abide by the decision of the court. [2]

Monitoring teams begin work of observing the peace process in Aceh. Teams consist of Indonesian military and GAM representatives alongside military observers from Thailand and the Philippines. [2]

2003:

January - Government raises fuel prices by 22%, telephone rates by 15% and electric rates by 6% under pressure from the IMF and other financial aid organizations. [2]

Government announces a rollback of some of the January 1 fuel price increases to 8%, after weeks of street protests. [2]

Indonesia gets US\$2.8 billion in loans from the CGI group of donor nations, after a conference on Bali. [2]

Economics minister Kuntjoro-Jakti says that Indonesia will not rely on International Monetary Fund financial aid after the end of the year, due to the burdensome restrictions required by the IMF loans. [2]

February - 50,000 attend a demonstration organized by Partai Keadilan against possible war in Iraq. [2]

Ret. Gen. Wiranto and six other military leaders are indicted for war crimes by the U.N. regarding the election violence in East Timor in 1999. The Indonesian government says it will ignore the indictments; Amien Rais issues an official protest. [2]

March - 300,000 take part in an NU-led demonstration in Surabaya against a U.S.-led war in Iraq. [2]

August–October - Three Bali bombing suspects are found guilty and sentenced to death for their roles in the 2002 attacks. A fourth suspect is given life imprisonment. [12]

2004:

April - Parliamentary and local elections: Golkar party of former President Suharto wins greatest share of vote, with Megawati Sukarnoputri's PDI-P coming second. [12]

July - First-ever direct presidential elections; first round narrows field to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and incumbent Megawati Sukarnoputri. [12]

Summary

1944-1945: **UK supports Dutch.**
1946-1949: **Struggles lead to independence.**
1958: **US supports rebels.**
1960-1961: **Soviet and US aid.**
1962-1963: **Clashes with Dutch and with Brunei and UK. US funds opposition.**
1965-1966: **Failed coup followed by US & UK supported slaughter. Links with West renewed.**
1975: **Invasion of E. Timor with approval of Aus., US & UK.**
1978: **UK military hardware.**
1989: **Actions in Irian Jaya.**
1991: **Santa Cruz massacre.**
1992: **E. Timor rebellion weakens.**
1996: **UK backs repression.**
1997: **IMF loan package.**
1999: **Martial law for E. Timor.**
2000-2001: **Loans, oil, violence.**
2002: **Trials over East Timor.**
2003: **IMF. UN. Iraq war.**

East Timor

1749:

Timor split following battle between Portuguese and Dutch. Portuguese take the eastern half. [2]

1942:

Japanese invade, fighting battles with Australian troops. Up to 60,000 East Timorese are killed. Japan in control until 1945. [2]

1965:

US supports the Suharto regime's grab for power under the auspices of a Communist plot during Indonesia's independence movement, and assists in the following murder of up to 1 million civilians. The CIA helps by compiling death lists of communists for Suharto to execute. [3]

1974:

Anti-Fascist revolution in Portugal leads to promise to free colonies, encouraging parties to prepare for new future. [2]

17th September - the CIA cables the following statement to Washington: 'Jakarta is now sending guerrillas to provoke incidents that provide an excuse to invade.' [4]

1975:

August - Portuguese administration withdraws to offshore island of Atauro. [2]

The Australian ambassador to Indonesia, Richard Woolcott, sends a cable to Canberra urging acquiescence with Indonesia's plans to annex East Timor. "It would seem to me that this department [of Minerals and Energy] might well have an interest in closing the present gap in the agreed sea border and this could be much more readily negotiated with Indonesia than with Portugal; or independent Portuguese Timor," he wrote. "I know I am recommending a pragmatic rather than a principled stand but that is what national interest and foreign policy is all about," [6]

October - Five foreign journalists killed along border with West Timor, allegedly by Indonesian troops. [2]

November - After brief civil war, Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) declares East Timor independent. [2]

December - The day before Indonesia's invasion of East Timor, Kissinger meets with Suharto and approves of the invasion (this fact was denied by the US government until documents confirming it were declassified in 2001). [3]

Philip Liechty, Senior CIA officer in Indonesia in 1975, told John Pilger: "What I saw was that my own government was very much involved in what was going on in East Timor... you can be 100 per cent certain that Suharto was explicitly given the green light to do what he did." [4]

In secret cable, British ambassador in Jakarta says Indonesia 'should absorb the territory as soon and as unobtrusively as possible' and that Britain 'should avoid taking sides against the Indonesian government'. [1]

Indonesia invades, using its fight against communism as a pretext. It annexes territory as its 27th province, a move not recognised by the UN. [2]

Strong resistance to Indonesian rule followed by repression and famine in which 200,000 people are thought to have died. [2]

1976:

January - United Nations involvement in East Timor was actively and successfully blocked by the US Ambassador to the UN, Daniel Moynahan. A cable from Moynahan to Kissinger boasted of the considerable progress he was making in stalling the UN. He later wrote: "The Department of State desired that the United Nations prove utterly ineffective... This task was given to me and I carried it through with no inconsiderable success." [4]

1978:

David Owen, then Foreign Secretary of Wilson's Labour government, agrees to sell the Hawk to Indonesia. From that point onwards, the British establishment played court to President Suharto by selling him more Hawks, missiles, helicopters, frigates, armoured vehicles, military communications and a fully equipped institution of technology for the Indonesian army. The pact was shamefully sealed by the superficial grandeur of royal handshakes during a visit by the Queen and Prince Charles soon after. [4]

1981:

Xanana Gusmao becomes leader of Falintil (Armed Forces of National Liberation of East Timor), the armed wing of Fretilin. [2]

1991:

Prime Minister John Major urges his European partners to cut aid to countries with bad human rights records. At the same time though, he agreed to the further sale of a billion dollars worth of Hawk aircraft to the Indonesian government, shaking hands with Indonesian Weapons Chief BJ Habibie at Downing Street. [4]

Santa Cruz cemetery massacre in which troops fire on mourners at a funeral in Dili of Fretilin supporter, killing more than 100 people.[2]

November - the British govt increased aid to Indonesia to 81 million - a rise of 250 per cent. Former Conservative MP Alan Clark, who played a major role in the deals, revealed that he sought no guarantees from the Indonesians as to how British weapons would be deployed. Asked whether he would have accepted a guarantee from the Indonesians that Hawks would not be used in East Timor, he retorted "A guarantee is worthless from any government as far as I'm concerned." He also scoffed at the claim that all the Hawks sold to Indonesia were merely 'training aircraft'. The fact of the matter is that all Hawks are 'trainers'. "That's just a label you put on it," he said. "The Hawk has a dual use with a capital D". [4]

1992:

Setback for the resistance as Gusmao is captured near Dili. In 1993 he is convicted of subversion and given a life sentence which is later reduced. [2]

1993:

Groups of East Timorese enter foreign embassies in Jakarta over the next few years seeking political asylum. [2]

1995:

20th anniversary of the Indonesian invasion marked by protest by 112 East Timorese and sympathisers who enter Russian and Dutch embassies in Jakarta. [2]

1996:

Acting Bishop of Dili, Carlos Belo, and resistance leader Jose Ramos Horta jointly awarded Nobel Peace Prize, raising international awareness of the East Timorese independence struggle. [2]

"Please, I beg you, do not sustain longer a conflict which without British arms sales to Indonesia could never have been sustained for so long."

[Bishop Belo to Tony Blair] [4]

1998:

There is no mention of any arms sales to Indonesia in the 1998 UK Foreign Office Annual Report. An Amnesty International study, however, uncovers that Labour have made 64 separate arms contracts with Indonesia since accession to power. [4]

Indonesian President Suharto resigns. Replaced by Habibie who suggests territory may be given special status within Indonesia. [2]

1999:

January - Indonesia says it will consider independence for East Timor if people reject autonomy. [2]

February-April - Gusmao moved from Jakarta prison to house arrest. In response to increasing violence by anti-independence activists, Gusmao orders guerrillas to resume independence struggle. [2]

May - Indonesia, Portugal sign agreement to allow East Timorese to vote on their future. Deal endorsed by UN. [2]

August 30 - Almost 99% of 450,000-strong electorate votes in UN-organised referendum. [2]

September - Result of referendum shows 78% voters favoured independence. [2]

Violence erupts as anti-independence militia helped by the Indonesian military resume campaign of terror, leaving up to 1,000 dead. A quarter of the population flees, mainly to West Timor. Martial law imposed. [2]

Much of East Timor is destroyed and approximately 200,000 to 300,000 refugees are created. The UN evacuates, leaving the East Timorese to the mercy of the Indonesian forces. [3]

Britain continues arms sales to Jakarta and finally agrees only to delay not stop them, while inviting Indonesia to an arms fair in Britain. Blair government tries to take credit for stopping Indonesian violence by helping to establish UN peace enforcement mission. [1] [5]

Australian-led peacekeeping force arrives, gradually restores order. Many militia members flee to West Timor to avoid arrest. Indonesian parliament recognises outcome of referendum. [2]

October - Gusmao released. UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) established. [2]

December - International donors at a Tokyo conference agree to provide US \$520 million in aid to help rebuild East Timor. [2]

2000:

September - UN evacuates staff from West Timor after murder of three refugee agency workers by pro-Indonesian militia gangs. An Indonesian court jails six men for up to 20 months for the killings, earning international outrage for being too lenient. [2]

2001:

East Timor, Australia sign deal over future revenues from oil and gas fields in the Timor Sea. East Timor is to get 90% of the revenue which could amount to billions of dollars over 20 years. [2]
August - Election of 88-member Constituent Assembly; Fretilin party wins, taking 55 seats. [2]

2002:

January - Truth and reconciliation commission opens to try and heal wounds of past. [2]
Indonesia inaugurates human rights court to hold military accountable for atrocities in East Timor after 1999 independence vote. [2]
February - East Timor assembly approves draft constitution envisaging government run along parliamentary lines. [2]
East Timor and Indonesia sign two agreements aimed at easing relations. [2]
April - Xanana Gusmao wins presidential elections. [2]
20 May - UN Security Council sets up UN Mission of Support in East Timor (Unmiset) to help East Timorese authorities. [2]
20 May - Independence: VIP guests including former US president Bill Clinton and Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri join celebrations in Dili. [2]
September - East Timor becomes 191st member of UN. [2]
November - Indonesian human rights tribunal convicts former pro-Jakarta militia leader Eurico Guterres of crimes against humanity for his part in 1999 massacre. [2]

2003:

March - Court in Jakarta sentences Indonesia's former military chief in East Timor, Brigadier General Noer Muis, to five years in jail for crimes against humanity. He is accused of failing to prevent attacks on civilians which followed 1999 independence vote. [2]
May - UN extends mandate of Unmiset for another year. [2]
August - Human rights court sentences Indonesian general Adam Damiri to three years in prison for failing to prevent violence during 1999 independence vote. [2]
December - Former militiaman Salvador Soares sentenced to ten and a half years in prison for his part in killing of two UN workers overseeing 1999 independence vote. [2]

2004:

January - Portugal announces it will give East Timor \$63m (50m euros) in aid over the next three years. [2]
February - Production at an offshore gasfield begins. The Bayu Undan project is expected to earn \$100m a year. [2]
UN Secretary General Annan calls for an extension to the UN presence in East Timor, but wants almost all peacekeepers withdrawn and a shift in focus towards helping fledgling political institutions. [2]
April - Prime Minister Alkatiri accuses Australia of unlawful exploitation of oil and gas resources in the Timor Sea. [2]
May - UN-backed tribunal issues arrest warrant for Indonesian presidential candidate General Wiranto. The former military chief has been accused of human rights abuses in East Timor. [2]

Summary

1749: **Timor split.**
1942: Japanese invade.
1965: **US supports Indonesian regime change.**
1974: **Indonesia tries to create excuse to invade, US knows.**

1975: Portuguese withdraw.

Australia knows Indonesia's plans.

East Timor declared independent.

US approves Indonesia's invasion. UK looks the other way.

Indonesia invades and repressive rule begins.

1976: US blocks UN involvement.

1978: UK starts to sell arms to Indonesia.

1999: East Timorese vote for independence. Indonesia responds with violence.

Britain continues arms sales.

Peacekeeping force arrives and Indonesia backs down.

2004: Australia accused of unlawful exploitation of oil and gas.

Chagos Islands

1815:

Treaty of Vienna gives United Kingdom legal title to Mauritius and its dependencies, including Chagos Archipelago. [2]

1950's:

A British colonial film shot in the 1950's notes that the people of the islands "live their lives in surroundings of wonderful natural beauty and in conditions most tranquil and benign". It also states that the islands are inhabited "mostly by men and women born and brought up on the islands". [13]

1952:

August - Tony Freeborn pilots his Shackleton from 205 Squadron at RAF Gan over Diego Garcia to photograph possible seaplane mooring sites for a proposed survey crew (which arrives in November). Tony's aircraft is the first aircraft to be seen in the skies of Diego Garcia since WWII. [9]

November - An RAF survey crew arrives in a Sunderland flying boat and surveys the northwest tip for a possible 6,000 foot airstrip. [9]

1960:

The United Nations General Assembly adopts Declaration 1514 (XV) on the Granting of Independence of Colonial Countries and Peoples. UN Declaration Paragraph 5 clearly states that the transfer of powers to the peoples of those territories which have not yet attained independence should be effected "without any conditions or reservations...." [2]

1961:

'A Special Committee on Decolonisation is created by United Nations' General Assembly (resolution No 1654), to monitor and report on the progress of all "trust and non self-governing territories" and their movement towards independence. [2]

1962:

The Chagos Agalega Company of the Seychells buys the coconut plantation from the previous owners, the Societe Huiliere de Diego et Peros (a French firm based in Paris). [9]

1964:

August - A joint US/UK military survey of the islands takes place. [13]

1965:

Resolution 2066 (XV) is passed : “Noting with deep concern that any step taken by the administrative power to detach certain islands from the territory of Mauritius for the purpose of establishing a military base would be in contravention of the Declaration and in particular paragraph 6 thereof ...Invites the administrating power to take no action which would dismember the territory of Mauritius and violate the territorial integrity ...” [2]

Chagossians visiting relatives and friends in Mauritius, are not allowed to return to the Chagos. They are informed that “The Islands are closed”. This, and other tactics, continue until 1973. [2] [13]

In the run up to full independence, a Mauritius Constitutional Conference is held at Lancaster House, London. Mauritius delegation is comprised of representatives from the Mauritius Labour Party (PT), the Parti Mauricien Social Democrate (PMSD), the Independent Forward Block (IFB), the Muslim Committee of Action (CAM), and two Independent Legislative Assembly’s members. [2]

BIOT Order in Council of the Court of Buckingham Palace to dismember the territory of Mauritius and violate its territorial integrity. Date of the actual legal implement of the “stealing” of the Islands. [2]

The Colonial Office states that the "prime objective of BIOT exercise was that the islands...hived off into the new territory should be under the greatest possible degree of UK control". The Foreign Office states that the islanders were to be "evacuated as and when defence interests require this", against which there should be "no insurmountable obstacle". [13]

First public announcement in regard of excision was made in the House of Commons in the United Kingdom. [2]

£ 3 million paid by the British Government to Mauritian Government for supposed “sale of Chagos Islands” [2] [9]

Following the Constitutional Conference, the Chagos Archipelago is detached from Mauritius and, along with three islands from the British colony of Seychelles, they are made into the new Colony of British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). [2]

1966:

December - Britain secretly leases Diego Garcia to the US for 50 years, with the option of an extension. This is done in exchange for a discount of millions of dollars on Polaris nuclear submarines - a way of concealing the payment. The US pays rent of one dollar per year. The deal was not disclosed to the US Congress, the British Parliament, or the United Nations. [2] [9] [10] [13]

Forcible evictions of Chagossians from now onwards, by the British and US authorities. [2]

The Permanent Under Secretary at the Foreign Office notes in a secret file: "We would not wish it to become general knowledge that some of the inhabitants have lived on Diego Garcia for at least two generations". [13]

One official notes that British strategy towards the Chagossians should be to "grant as few rights with as little formality as possible". In particular, Britain wants to avoid fulfilling its obligations to the islanders under the UN charter. [13]

1967:

February - BIOT Ordinance No 1, the Compulsory Acquisition of Land for Public Purposes Ordinance, is made. It empowers the Commissioner to acquire land compulsorily for a public purpose, notably and explicitly the defence purposes of the UK or Commonwealth or other foreign countries in agreement with the UK. [9]

March - The Commissioner makes the BIOT Ordinance No 2, the Acquisition of Land for Public Purposes (Private Treaty) Ordinance, enabling him to acquire land by agreement for the same public purposes. [9]

April - Acting under the provisions of BIOT Ordinance No 2, The British Government buys ALL the plantations throughout the Chagos archipelago for 660,000 pounds from The Chagos Agalega Company. [9] [10]

1968:

The colonial authorities cut off food imports to the Chagos islands. After 1968 food ships do not sail to the islands. [13]

Britain begins illegal and secret removal of 1,500 population of Chagos islands, including Diego Garcia, following agreement to lease islands to US. Whitehall conspiracy begins, contending there are no indigenous inhabitants. [1] [10]

The Foreign Office legal advisor notes that "we are able to make up the rules as we go along and treat the inhabitants of BIOT as not 'belonging' to it in any sense". [13]

The Foreign Secretary warns of the "possibility...(that) some of them might one day claim a right to remain in the BIOT by virtue of their citizenship of the UK and the Colonies". [13]

Diego Garcia Islanders given two months to pack up and leave forever. Most are placed on the other Chagos Islands of Peros Banos and Salomon. [2]

The Colony of Mauritius which had comprised, inter alia, the Chagos Archipelago is granted independence but without Chagos. [2]

August - The British Commissioner for the BIOT issues a regulation forbidding the killing of Green Sea Turtles, or the possession or sale of any turtle or turtle product. [9]

1969:

April - The Foreign Secretary secures Prime Minister Harold Wilson's approval to clear the whole of the Chagos Islands of their inhabitants. [13]

1970:

Non-Aligned Summit Resolution adopts to make the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace. [2]

January - A Foreign Office legal advisor notes that it is important "to maintain the fiction that the inhabitants of the Chagos are not a permanent or semi-permanent population". [13]

1971:

The US Navy begins construction of the military base. The first runway is completed in July. [9] [13]

The British Indian Ocean Territory Immigration (BIOT) Ordinance exiles all the people of Chagos. [2] [10]

A Foreign Office minute reads "In the matter of the Ilois, there may be an awkward problem of presentation. Meanwhile, the less said the better". [13]

United Nations General Assembly adopts Indian Ocean Peace Zone Resolution 2832. [2]

1972:

United Nations Ad-Hoc Committee is set up so as to implement the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace resolution. [2]

A US/UK agreement is made to establish a communications facility on Diego Garcia. This allows the US to construct and operate a naval communications facility on the island, with Britain assisting in manning the facility. [13]

1973:

March - US Naval Communications Station, Diego Garcia, is commissioned. [9]

October - The last of the plantation workers (commonly referred to as the Ilois) and their families are shipped out on the MV NORDVAER, ending 178 years of continuous civilian habitation. As part of the eviction of the Ilois, the U.S. Navy kills all the islanders' dogs. [9] [13]

Christian Simon, in despair, commits suicide on the boat trip. [2]

The confused and frightened exiles have to find what accommodation they can. Most of them end up in slums, some in windowless animal huts. The last shipload of islanders stage a sit-down strike on board the ship and are rewarded with small payments of money from the High Commission, which deepens resentment among earlier exiles. [2] [10]

Housing estate houses and dockers flats are made available to some families because of demonstration onboard of Nordvaer. [2]

The British government transfers £650,000 to the Mauritian government for the aid of the Chagossian exiles. Some of this money is intended to be used to resettle the exiles on farm land but there is much

disagreement and the exiles are so desperate for money, that the resettlement plan is abandoned and, eventually, in 1978 the money was disbursed. Although this money helps some of the exiles to obtain better housing, most of them are left no better off. All of them have been forced to borrow money in order to survive and their share has to be used to discharge their debts. [9] [10]

1974:

The British High Commission on Mauritius refuses to act on a petition presented by the islanders indicating their wish to return home. The British state that the "High Commission cannot intervene between yourselves as Mauritians and the government of Mauritius, who assumed responsibility for your resettlement". This despite the fact that many of the Chagossians could claim nationality "of the UK and its colonies". A similar petition is refused in 1975. [13]

Britain approves US proposals for the development of the communications facility on Diego Garcia into a support facility of the US navy, which plans are incorporated into a new agreement in 1976. [13]

1975:

George Champion sets up "1966 Society for Diego Garcia" in UK to support Chagossians. [2]

1976:

Seychelles gains an important victory when Aldabra, Desroches and Farquhar Islands are returned to the Seychelles. The US cancels its 60-year lease agreement with the UK. [2]

Chagossian, Michel Vencatassen puts court action against British Government. He is assisted by his lawyer, Bernard Sheridan. [2] [13]

Organisation Fraternelle supports Chagossians, sets up Comité Ilois OF. [2]

An "exchange of notes" takes place allowing the extension of the runway (an 8,000 foot runway had by then already been built) as Diego Garcia is gradually turned into a fully functioning US military base. [13]

1977:

October - US Naval Support Facility, Diego Garcia, is commissioned. [9]

1978:

At Bain Des Dames in Port-Louis 6 women go on hungerstrike, including Marie Lisette Talate, Charlesia Alexis and Louise Latouche. Supporters who stayed overnight include Ragini Kistnasamy, Lindsey Collen, Marie France Favory, Rajni Lallah, Serge Rayapoullé, Lindsay Aza. Ram Seegobin assisted as medical practitioner. [2]

Demonstration in the streets of Port-Louis, organised by the MMM and others, over Diego Garcia and Tromelin. [2]

1979:

A "Comité" asks Sheridan (Mr. Vencatassen's lawyer) to negotiate more compensation. British Government offers £ 1.5 m on the express condition that (i) Vencatassen withdraw his case (ii) sign a "full and final" and "never to return" document. [2] [13]

Visit of sailors (Mauritians and Mauritians of Chagossian origin) to Chagos. [2]

1980:

Organisation for African Unity passes resolution calling for the unconditional return of Diego Garcia to Mauritius, as its continued occupation represents a permanent threat to Africa as a Zone of Peace. [2]

A unanimous resolution is taken at the Heads of State OAU Conference at Freetown, Sierra Leone, 1-4th July 1980, to demand dismantling of the Diego Garcia base, and the retrocession of Chagos to Mauritius. [2]

April - The Diego Garcia base is used as a stop off for the mission to rescue US personnel held hostage in Iran. The mission is unsuccessful, but provides the first positive proof of the value of Diego Garcia's strategic position for the US. [9]

Especially after the Iranian revolution of 1979, "Diego Garcia saw the most dramatic build up of any location since the Vietnam War era", according to the US Navy. The US spends \$500 million on a construction programme and prepositions equipment in the island for rapid deployment. [13]

1981:

Chagossian women's hungerstrike at Company Gardens. 3 days street demonstration by 200 women including MLF and *Lalit* women. Arrest of 8 women and detention in Line Barracks for three days. [2]

Trial of 8 women arrested at the demonstration under the POA (Public Order Act). [2]

Front National de Soutien aux Ilois set up. [2]

Publication of Hervé Silva's Report on the "Survey on the Conditions of Living of the Ilois Community Displaced from the Chagos Archipelago". [2]

Delegation of Chagossians goes to London for negotiations, as a direct result of street demonstrations and massive mobilisation. [2]

Lagazet Lalit de Klas publishes proof of nuclear materials being transshipped at Diego Garcia. [2]

July - The US Navy awards a contract to the Houston-based firms of Raymond International Builders, Inc., Brown and Root, Inc., and the Middlesex, England firm of Mowlem International Ltd. (RBRM) to construct facilities for the US Navy and US Air Force over the next five years, consisting of 128 projects at a cost of more than \$400 million. [9]

1982:

Select Committee of Parliament set up by a Standing Order, with terms of reference to look into the circumstances which led to and followed the excision of the Chagos Archipelago including Diego Garcia, from Mauritius in 1965 and at the exact nature of the transactions that took place. [2]

As a result of the popular mobilization, street demonstrations, arrests and trials of women demonstrators, and after the 1981 negotiations, UK pays Rs75,880,000 compensation to the Chagossians. Ilois Trust Fund is set up. [2] In order to obtain a share the exiles have to sign away their right to ever return to their homeland. But they don't know that this is what they are signing. [10] [13]

1983:

Report of the Select Committee on the Excision of the Chagos Archipelago is published. [2]

The 7th Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, when it meets in Delhi, votes a resolution for the dismantling of the base and for the retrocession of Diego Garcia and Chagos to Mauritius. [2]

September - The last SEABEE Detachment (from NMCB-62) departs. In 12 years, the SEABEES have completed 220 projects for the US Navy and US Air Force valued at \$200 million - the largest peacetime Naval construction project in history. [9]

1987:

August - The US Air Force deploys B-52s to Diego Garcia for the first time during OPERATION ERNEST WILL, which was in response to the Iranian mining of the Persian Gulf. [9]

1989:

The US, UK and France pull out of the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace Ad-Hoc Committee to prevent the Colombo Conference of 1990 from going ahead. [2]

1990:

Hungerstrike of the Organisation Fraternelle is held at Pointe aux Sables. [2]

The Mauritian State tables an official motion to put Diego Garcia and the Chagos Archipelago on to the United Nations General Assembly agenda. Some weeks later, it withdraws this motion. [2]

August - The first three ships of Marine Prepositioned Ship Squadron TWO depart Diego Garcia and reach Saudi Arabia on August 15. The remaining two ships of MPS Squadron TWO departed shortly thereafter. They carried everything required for 16,500 men of the 7th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, who flew in and married up with their equipment. The 7th MEB was combat ready by August 25 - the first heavy combat unit ready for action during OPERATION DESERT STORM. This was the first use of the MPS in an actual crisis. [9]

1991:

US launches bombing missions against Iraq from Diego Garcia base. [2] [9] [13]

1992:

Mauritian new Republican Constitution names Chagos including Diego Garcia as part of Mauritius. [2]

The US uses Diego Garcia as a staging post for its intervention in Somalia. [13]

1994:

Agreement is signed between Britain and Mauritius on Fishing. This is the first official agreement in which the Mauritian State accepts the existence of a military base on its territory. [2]

1995:

The UN Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Committee draws attention to the fact that self determination has not been implemented in the case of Mauritius because of illegal occupation of Chagos in its Concluding Observations, when Mauritius country report is being reviewed. [2]

1996:

Pelindaba Treaty for a Nuclear-Arms-Free Africa is drawn up and signed. The Mauritian State accepts that dotted lines be put around Diego Garcia in the Treaty map. [2]

September - More bombing runs against Iraq fly from Diego Garcia in "Operation Desert Strike". [9]

1997:

From here onwards, Official Secrets Act in UK 30-year secrecy rule expires. Documents now public. [2]

Rann Nu Diego Committee is set up by Lalit and Grup Refizye Chagos. Some 12 organizations members. Negotiations with *Greenpeace* to visit Diego Garcia by boat. [2]

1998:

Ferdinand Mandarin and his legal advisor, Hervé Lasemillante, present case for Chagossians as "autochtone" at United Nations Committee in Geneva. [2]

September - The Chagossians launch a new case against the British government. [13]

December - More bombing raids against Iraq fly from Diego Garcia, this time in "Operation Desert Fox". [9]

1999:

Lalit runs international campaigns for electors in their countries to put pressure on US President Clinton and UK Prime Minister Blair to close the US base, compensate Chagossians, and make way for re-uniting Mauritius. [2]

Victory in *Bancoult v Queen* case, granting Chagossians permission to fight for the right to return. [2] [14]

2000:

African Growth and Opportunity Act is passed. [2]

Ram Seegobin, *Lalit* member, exposes link between AGOA and Diego Garcia at international workers' meetings in San Francisco and Los Angeles. [2]

The US government continues to make plain its opposition to the resettlement of the islands. For example a confidential letter from the State Department to the Foreign Office says that such resettlement "would significantly downgrade the strategic importance of a vital military asset unique in the region". [13]

November - High Court rules against government that Chagos islanders be allowed to return to some of their homeland islands, but not Diego Garcia. When asked about actually returning, the UK and the US both say it is the other's responsibility. [1] [3] [4] [9] [10] [13]

2001:

October - Bombing missions against Afghanistan from Diego Garcia commence in "Operation Enduring Freedom". [2] [9] [13]

United Nations General Assembly adopts new Resolution on Indian Ocean Zone of Peace. [2]
December - A suit is filed in the USA on behalf of descendants of the island's workers for compensation for "Forced Relocation, Torture, Racial Discrimination, Cruel, Inhuman, Degrading Treatment, Genocide, Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress, Negligence, and Trespass". The suit is expected to take years, or even decades, to conclude. [2] [9]

A UN Human Rights Committee report states "The State Party (ie the United Kingdom government) should, to the extent still possible, seek to make exercise of the Ilois' right of return to their territory practicable. It should consider compensation for the denial of this right over an extended period." [13]

2002:

Mauritian government for the first time officially receives an official of the BIOT. [2]

Chagos Refugees Group and their legal advisor, Robin Mardaymootoo, sue the British state for damages and reparations. [2]

Sahringon holds Strategy Workshop in Mauritius. Organizations and individuals present vote a resolution for US Base Closure, for reunification of Mauritius, for reparations and resettlement, for an ecological assessment, and for the Mauritian Government to create a 22nd Constituency for Chagos, and to present a bold resolution at the UN. The resolution is circulated for Africa-wide endorsement. [2]

US uses *African Growth and Opportunity Act* (Trade Law) to silence Mauritian State.

US Armed Forces prepare Diego Garcia for war against Iraq. [2]

Foreign Office website continues to lie that there are 'no indigenous inhabitants' of the Chagos islands, while Foreign Office continues in effect to block islanders' return. [1]

There are allegations in the US press that Diego Garcia is being used as a location for the interrogation of "al-Qaeda suspects". [13]

May - British passports are granted to Chagossians. [10]

June - A feasibility study into resettlement of the islands is completed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It concludes that resettlement would be difficult, precarious and costly ,and mentions floods, earthquakes and global warming as possible hazards. But Harvard resettlement expert Jonathan Jenness says the study's conclusions are "erroneous in every assertion" He also criticises the study for its lack of data, lack of objectivity, and a complete failure to consult the Chagossians themselves. It has been pointed out that a settled population lived there happily for generations, and that the Americans live there now without worrying unduly about natural disasters.

[10] [13]

2003:

March - Bombers fly from Diego Garcia to bomb Baghdad in "Operation Iraqi Freedom". [9] [13]

October - The Chagossian's right to return to the Diego Garcia is denied by the British Courts as is their right to compensation. [5] [6][7] [8] [9] [10]

2004:

June - On Thursday 10 June 2004 (better known as "Super Thursday" - local election day) royal orders are suddenly passed banning anyone from setting foot on the Chagos islands. The government makes sure no one knows about this shocking move until it is too late. Not only do they pass the laws secretly as "orders in council" - requiring no prior consultation or debate - they also bury the move on a day when the news is dominated by the elections. The orders amount to a new act of exile, overruling the court victory in 2000. This blow is followed a few days later by the refusal of permission to appeal a High Court ruling from October 2003 which denied the Chagossians compensation. [10]

July - Diego Garcians living temporarily in the UK pressurise the UK Government to allow them to return home. UK Prime Minister says that Diego Garcia is strategically important to the UK and therefore the Islanders cannot be allowed to return home. [11] [13]

October - One of the Islanders, Nicholas Antoine, is challenging the Government to help the exiles as Reigate & Banstead Council is ordered by the High Court to continue to provide accommodation. This is seen by many as a test case on which the remainder rest.[11]

2006:

May - On Thursday 11 May 2006 the High Court overturns the orders in council of 2004, giving the Chagossians back the right of return that they won in 2000. The islanders' solicitor Richard Gifford says: "The British Government has been defeated in its attempt to abolish the right of abode of the islanders after first deporting them in secret 30 years ago...This is the fourth time in five years that Her Majesty's judges have deplored the treatment inflicted upon this fragile community." [10] [12]

2007:

April - The US Navy upgrades its submarine base at Diego Garcia. [15]

May - The Chagossians again win the right to return home. The British High Court rules that the government had acted unlawfully in using its royal prerogative powers to make an Order in Council, not subject to parliamentary debate, to prevent the islanders from returning. [16]

October - It is claimed that the CIA have a secret prison on Diego Garcia. [17]

The US upgrades its stealth bomber hangers on Diego Garcia. [18]

2008:

February - The UK government blocks access to papers giving information about the use of the Diego Garcia base as a secret prison. [19]

The UK government admits that "rendition" flights stopped at Diego Garcia. [20]

March - The UN says that the base on Diego Garcia has been used as a prison. This is later apparently confirmed by US sources. [21][22] [23] [24]

October - The UK House of Lords overturns an earlier High Court decision giving the Chagossians the right to return home. The US had put pressure in the UK to arrive at this decision. [25] [26] [27] [28] [29] [30]

The Chagossians declare their intentions to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights. [32]

2009:

May - The identities of two people allegedly tortured while imprisoned on Diego Garcia, are revealed. [31]

June - The European Court of Human Rights' investigation into the case of the Chagossians right of return is under way. [33]

Summary

1815: UK gets Chagos Islands.

1965: UK begins to depopulate the islands.

1966: UK secretly leases Diego Garcia to US.

1971: The US Navy begins construction of the military base.

1973: Last of islanders removed.

1976: First court action begun against the UK government.

1991 onwards: US uses Diego Garcia base in actions against Iraq, Somalia and

Afghanistan.

1999: Islanders granted permission to fight for the right to return.

2000: Islanders win partial right to return. The UK and US stall.

2003: Chagossians denied right to return to Diego Garcia.

2004: "orders in council" used to ban the islanders' return.

Right to appeal 2003 ruling denied.

2006: 2004 orders in council overturned.

2007: Diego Garcia prison.

2008: Right to return denied.